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COMMENTARY

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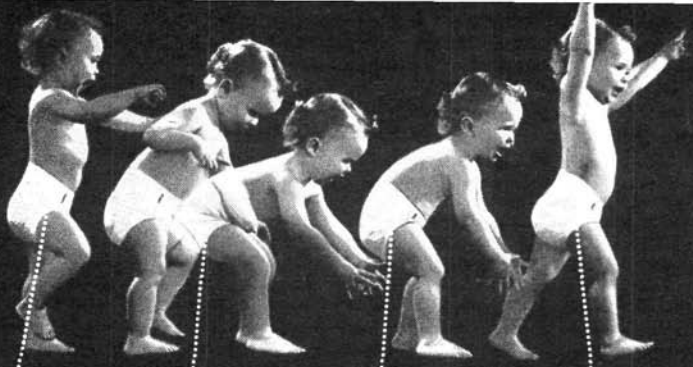

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COMMENTARY

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In sponsoring COMMENTARY, *the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. Its pages will be hospitable to diverse points of view and belief, and it hopes to encourage original creative endeavor in the various fields of culture.*

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IRVING M. ENGEL, *President*

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This *I Believe*

by Arnold J. Toynbee*

"In a World War III, each of the two belligerent camps would be totally encircled by the other. And total encirclement of each by all in an atomic war surely spells self-destruction for the human race.

"What is the moral? The moral is that we must aim at reaching, and at keeping on, a moral level that is high above our ancestors' most exalted moral ambitions. Though both camps feel—and not unreasonably feel—today that they must arm themselves heavily as a necessary measure of insurance, we must school ourselves to arm effectively, as a deterrent against possible attack (for we can hardly hope any longer to achieve effective self-defense), without feeling hostile or bitter or angry toward our potential opponents.

"On both sides of the Iron Curtain we human beings have now to be unprecedentedly self-controlled and patient with one another. We are all now in the same boat, on board this small atom-bomb-haunted planet. And we are all in the same spiritually humbling situation. Ever since man has known anything about himself he has known that he is an incongruous creature, in whom astonishingly high moral, as well as intellectual, capacities are combined with abysmally low moral depths.

"In our own time the spiritual paradox of this inner contradiction in human nature, and also its practical perilousness, has been accentuated by the speed and range of our intellectual triumphs in the field of physical science and in the practical applications of science in technology. So today, if ever, 'I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'

"Here is a common human plight that is more serious even than the possession of atomic weapons, because it is our moral plight that makes our physical weapons dangerous. Here is ground for a humility that lies deeper than the various superstructures of mankind's religions and ideologies. Here is a problem that is common to all human beings as such. Cannot we cooperate to cope with it, without prejudice to our prejudices about other things?"

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J. M. Kaplan, President

*WHAT WORLD WAR II DID—AND DIDN'T—SETTLE
by Arnold J. Toynbee
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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

Middle East Tour *Hal Lehrman*

The well-known reporter and analyst of the problems of Israel's development since the early days of the state is on a tour that will take him to North Africa and several of the Arab countries, in addition to Israel. Mr. Lehrman will contribute a series of articles to these pages beginning in the early fall.

Albuquerque: Where a Man's a Man *Albert Rosenfeld*

Until recent years the old Southwest tradition that "a man's a man" prevailed in Albuquerque. Then Jim Crow came to town—some say from adjoining Texas. The lively tale of how discrimination was routed by a concerned citizenry armed with an FEPC law.

Indonesia: Between Scylla and Charybdis *Peter Schmid*

A first-hand account of a troubled paradise on the eve of a crucial election, by a roving correspondent.

Settling Matters at the Summit *G. F. Hudson*

What were the accomplishments of the Geneva Conference? How does the world stand post-Geneva? By an acute observer of the international scene.

Dress Line Success *David Boroff*

The life and philosophy of a successful dress manufacturer, offering a glimpse into the inner world of the garment center.

The Rabbi of Minsk *Andrew Meisels*

A portrait of the last remaining rabbi and synagogue of the once great Russian Jewish center of Minsk, by one of the American college editors who visited the USSR last year.

Adventures of a Jewish Collector *Cecil Roth*

The distinguished British historian has gathered a notable private collection of Jewish ceremonial and art objects and rare books, all on a scholar's income. He tells how he landed some of his prizes, and how others got away.

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COMMENTARY

THE "TRIPLE MELTING POT"

The Third Generation: From Ethnic to Religious Diversity

WILL HERBERG

THE immigrant who came to this country by the millions in the latter part of the 19th and first part of the 20th centuries was expected sooner or later, either in his own person or through his children, to give up virtually everything he had brought with him from the "old country"—his language, his nationality, his manner of life—and to adopt the ways of his new home. Within broad limits, however, his becoming an American did not involve his abandoning the old religion in favor of some native American substitute. "[In this country] from the very beginning, we did not really expect a man to change his faith." This fact, to which George R. Stewart calls attention in his *American Ways of Life,* is of immense significance for understanding mid-20th-century America. It is a fact of the historical and sociological order, not of the theological; the immigrant was not expected to change his faith upon arrival in this country, not because Americans were indifferent to religion or were committed to theological views which called for non-interference in religious matters, but because almost from the beginning the structure of American society presupposed diversity and substantial equality of religious associations. Not only was the immigrant expected to retain his old religion, as he was not expected to retain his old language or nationality, but such was the shape of America that it was largely in and through his religion that he—or rather his children and grandchildren—found an identifiable place in American life.

IF THERE is a standard, or ideal, American cultural-political type to which all of us are expected to conform (by a process known as "Americanization"), it is also inescapable that the American social scene is one of the utmost diversity. At one time it was thought that this diversity was essentially an ethnic one. But now, WILL HERBERG writes, we may very well have to look for the sources of American diversity elsewhere, as ethnic differences gradually dissolve. Mr. Herberg's writings on sociological and religious matters appear frequently in our own pages and in those of other periodicals. The present article is taken from *Protestant-Catholic-Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology,* to be published by Doubleday in the fall (copyright 1955 by Will Herberg).

I

AS SOON as the immigrant family arrived in the New World it got caught up in a far-reaching double process. On the one hand, the conditions of American life made for the emergence of the ethnic group, in terms of which the immigrant identified himself and was located in the larger community. On the other hand, however, the formation of the ethnic group at the center

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of immigrant life was from the very beginning accompanied by its dissolution at the periphery. The ethnic group emerged to define and express the immigrant's curious combination of foreignness and Americanness; but his children, the moment they entered school, the moment even they were let out on the street to play with children of other tongues and origins, began to escape the ethnic-immigrant life of their parents. Their language, their culture, their system of values, their outlook on life underwent drastic change, sometimes obviously, sometimes imperceptibly; they were becoming American, assimilated, acculturated, no longer fully at home in the immigrant family and ethnic group, though not yet fully at home in America. Though this double process was operative from the very beginning, the "negative" aspect was not visible so long as large-scale immigration continued; all phases of ethnic life flourished, societies spread and increased in membership, foreign-language publications grew in scope and circulation, cultural institutions prospered. But this prosperity and expansion at the center could not halt the disintegration of ethnic group life that came with the growing Americanization of the second generation.

These conflicting cultural demands made on the second generation engendered an acute malaise in the sons and daughters of the immigrants. Frequently, the man of the second generation attempted to resolve his dilemma by forsaking the ethnic group in which he found himself. As Marcus L. Hansen writes in *The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant:* "He wanted to forget everything," this man of the second generation, "the foreign language . . . the religion [of his immigrant parents] . . . the family customs. . . . The second generation wanted to forget, and even when the ties of family affection were strong, wanted to lose as many of the evidences of foreign origin as they could shuffle off."* The great mobility of American society encouraged this process, and was in turn spurred by it. As the second generation prospered economically and culturally, and moved upward in the social scale, assimilation was speeded; the speeding of assimilation stimulated and quickened the upward movement.

First to go was the foreign language and the culture associated with it. Religion too was affected, though not so explicitly. The second generation developed an uneasy relation to the faith of their fathers: sometimes this meant simply indifference; in other cases, a shift to denominations regarded as more "American." In most cases, however, the ties with the old religion were never completely broken.

The immediate reaction of many of the second generation was escape. But enough of this generation always remained in the ethnic group to provide a permanent nucleus around which the incoming masses of immigrants could gather and organize their lives in the New World. Through the 19th and well into the 20th century, the ethnic group throve and flourished.

Then came the stopping of immigration, first as a consequence of the world war, and later through the restrictive legislation of the 1920's. Almost at once the hitherto hidden effects of the assimilative process became evident. "The total halt to immigration after 1924 severed the last remaining ties [of the immigrants and their children] to the Old World. Without addition from across the ocean, memories of transatlantic antecedents faded. As the second, and in time, the third generation grew to maturity . . . the old customs grew unfamiliar in the bustle of American life," writes Oscar Handlin in *The American People in the Twentieth Century*. The various activities of the ethnic group began to shrivel and disappear; the ethnic group itself, in its older form at least, became less and less intelligible and relevant to American reality. It was the end of an era.

But if it was the end, it was also the beginning. The final drying-up of the stream of immigration, which cut the ground from under the ethnic group, coincided with

*This essay was reprinted in the November 1952 COMMENTARY.

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the emergence of the immigrant community's third generation. The last wave of the "new" immigration had begun in the 1870's; by the 1920's, grandsons and great-grandsons of the earlier immigrants were becoming increasingly plentiful. During the years of large-scale immigration, the third generation had either not yet appeared, or, where it did exist, could hardly influence the ethnic picture in any important way. But now the third generation's outlook and temper became increasingly determinative. Not even the momentary upsurge of ethnic nationalism in the 1930's, and again under the exigencies of the postwar years, could materially change the new picture.

Marcus Hansen forcefully formulated his "principle of third-generation interest" in these terms: "what the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember." "After the second generation," Hansen points out, "comes the third. . . . [The members of the third generation] have no reason to feel any inferiority when they look around them. They are American-born. Their speech is the same as that of those with whom they associate. Their material wealth is the average possession of the typical citizen." The third generation, in short, really managed to get rid of the immigrant foreignness, the hopelessly double alienation of the generation that preceded it; it became American in a sense that had been, by and large, impossible for the immigrants and their children. That problem, at least, was solved; but its solution paradoxically rendered more acute the perennial problem of "belonging" and self-identification. They were Americans, but what *kind* of Americans? They could not be simply "shapeless integers of a homogeneous mass," Oscar Handlin observes. "They desired a sense of identity that would explain why they were different from 'One Man's Family.' They wished to belong to a group." But what group could they belong to? The old-line ethnic group, with its foreign language and culture, was not for them; they were Americans. But the old family religion, the old ethnic religion, could serve where language and culture could not; the religion of the immigrants, with certain necessary modifications, was accorded a place in the American scheme of things that made it at once both genuinely American and a familiar principle of group identification. The connection with the family religion had never been completely broken, and to religion, therefore, the men and women of the third generation now began to turn to define their place in American society in a way that would sustain their Americanness and yet confirm the tie that bound them to their forebears, whom they now no longer had any reason to reject, whom indeed, for the sake of a "heritage," they now wanted to "remember." Religious association now became the primary context of self-identification and social location for the third and also for the bulk of the second generation of America's immigrants, and by this time America's immigrants were, by and large, America's people.

But in thus becoming the primary context of social location, religious association itself underwent significant change. All of the many churches, sects, and denominations that characterize the American religious scene continued to thrive. But "increasingly religious activities fell into a fundamental tripartite division that had begun to take form earlier in the century. Men were Catholics, Protestants, or Jews, categories based less on theological than on social distinctions" (Handlin). A new and unique social structure was emerging in America, the "religious community."

In the early 1940's, Ruby Jo Kennedy undertook an investigation of intermarriage trends in New Haven from 1870 to 1940. She published her findings in the *American Journal of Sociology* for January 1944 under the significant title, "Single or Triple Melting Pot?" These findings singularly illumine the development we have been studying.

Mrs. Kennedy sought to answer certain central questions:

1. To what extent do individuals marry within their own culture [i.e., ethnic] groups? Which groups seem least and which

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most inclined to in-marriage? Is ethnic endogamy becoming more or less prevalent with the passage of time? What variations appear between the several ethnic groups in this regard . . . ?

2. When out-marriage does occur, is group preference discernible? That is, when individuals of any ethnic group marry out, do they demonstrate pronounced likes and dislikes for specified other groups? What reasons can be discovered for these preferences?

3. How does religious affiliation influence tendencies toward in- or out-marriage?

The years 1870, 1900, 1930, and 1940 were isolated for detailed examination. The ethnic groups that came in for consideration were the British-American, the Irish, the German, the Scandinavian, the Jewish, the Italian, and the Polish. Altogether, records of 9,044 marriages in the four selected years were subjected to classification and analysis, and the relevant facts correlated.

"The large nationality groups in New Haven," Mrs. Kennedy found, "represent a triple division on religious grounds: Jewish, Protestant (British-American, German, and Scandinavian), and Catholic (Irish, Italian, and Polish). . . ." In its early immigrant days, each of these ethnic groups tended to be endogamous; with the years, however, people began to marry outside the group. Thus, Irish in-marriage was 93.05 per cent in 1870, 74.75 per cent in 1900, 74.25 per per cent in 1930, and 45.06 per cent in 1940; German in-marriage was 86.67 per cent in 1870, 55.26 per cent in 1900, 39.84 per cent in 1930, and 27.19 per cent in 1940; for the Italians and the Poles, the comparable figures were 97.71 per cent and 100 per cent respectively in 1900, 86.71 per cent and 68.04 per cent in 1930, and 81.89 per cent and 52.78 per cent in 1940. But "while strict ethnic endogamy is loosening, religious endogamy is persisting. . . ." Members of Catholic stocks married Catholics in 95.35 per cent of the cases in 1870, 85.78 per cent in 1900, 82.05 per cent in 1930, and 83.71 per cent in 1940; members of Protestant stocks married Protestants in 99.11 per cent of the cases in 1870, 90.86 per cent in 1900, 78.19 per cent in 1930, and 79.72 per cent in 1940; Jews married Jews in 100 per cent of the cases in 1870, 98.82 per cent in 1900, 97.01 per cent in 1930, and 94.32 per cent in 1940. "Future cleavages," in Mrs. Kennedy's opinion, "will therefore be along religious lines rather than along nationality lines as in the past. . . . Cultural [i.e., ethnic] lines may fade, but religious barriers are holding fast. . . . When marriage crosses religious barriers, as it often does, religion still plays a prominent role, especially among Catholics," in that such marriages are often conditioned upon, and result in, one of the partners being brought into the religious community of the other. "The traditional 'single melting pot' idea must be abandoned, and a new conception, which we term the 'triple melting pot' theory of American assimilation, will take its place, as the true expression of what is happening to the various nationality groups in the United States. . . . The 'triple melting pot' type of assimiliation is occurring through intermarriage, with Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism serving as the three fundamental bulwarks. . . . The different nationalities are merging, but within three religious compartments rather than indiscriminately. . . .* A triple

*Two major groups stand measurably outside this division of American society into three "melting pots"—the Negroes and the recent Latin-American immigrants (Mexicans in the Southwest, Puerto Ricans in New York and other Eastern centers). Ethnic amalgamation within the religious community does not yet include them to any appreciable extent; their primary context of self-identification and social location remains their ethnic or "racial" group. (See C. Wright Mills, Clarence Senior, and Rose Kohn Goldsen, *The Puerto Rican Journey* and John R. Scotford, *Within These Borders: Spanish-Speaking Peoples in the U.S.A.*) There is reason to believe that with the cessation of large-scale Puerto Rican immigration and the emergence of an American third generation, this group will tend to break up into two distinct sections, one "white," the other "colored" (defined by a complex of "racial" and socio-cultural factors), with each section moving toward absorption into the major divisions of the general community. The future of the Negroes in the United States constitutes a much more difficult problem, about which very little may be said with any assurance today.

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religious cleavage, rather than a multilinear nationality cleavage, therefore seems likely to characterize American society in the future." The very meaning of the word "intermarriage" (as applied to whites) has undergone a significant change. A generation ago, it still meant *ethnic* intermarriage *(Abie's Irish Rose)*; today, it regularly means *religious* intermarriage (Protestant-Catholic-Jewish).

YET though the "religious community"—the term we have given to what Mrs. Kennedy calls a religious "cleavage" or "compartment"—began rapidly to emerge as the primary context of self-identification and social location, it would be misleading to conclude that the old ethnic lines had disappeared or were no longer significant. The older identifications continued to enjoy a vitality, but their form changed as the third generation began to make its mark on the ethnic picture. Formerly, religion had been merely a part, and to some a dispensable part, of the ethnic group's culture and activities; now the religious community was becoming primary, and ethnic interests, loyalties, and memories were more and more absorbed in and manifested through this new social structure.

In politics, half-forgotten, half-buried ethnic allegiances and prejudices still play a sizable part, as Samuel Lubell and others have shown. But in politics, too, the party managers are beginning to think in terms of Catholic, Protestant, and Jew, subsuming many of the older ethnic distinctions under this new tripartite pattern.

A revealing illustration of the new tendency to think in terms of these religious categories even where ethnic considerations are central is provided in the way we envisage the problem of minorities and minority discrimination. It is obvious that such discrimination operates primarily on ethnic or "racial" grounds, not only in the case of Negroes but also, for example, in the case of Jews who are barred from certain clubs and resorts, and of second- and third-generation Italian Americans who meet with difficulties in gaining admission to certain colleges and professional schools. There is a vague recognition of this fact in the familiar formula which calls for "no discrimination on grounds of race, religion, or national origin": "race" referring to Negroes, "religion" to Jews and Catholics, "national origin" to ethnic stocks of the "new" immigration (from Eastern and Southeastern Europe). Yet when a joint committee is set up to fight such discrimination, it is not set up as a committee of representatives of ethnic groups, say Poles, Italians, and French Canadians, along with Negroes and Jews; on the contrary, the committee is almost certain to be composed of Negroes, Jews, *and Catholics*, with Protestants coming in for support and good will. It is assumed that through the Jewish and Catholic communities the various ethnic groups with a grievance will find expression and representation. The Catholic Church in particular is conceived as a kind of over-all institution embracing and representing the major ethnic groups (aside from Jews and Negroes) that still suffer from discrimination. And so it happens that a thoroughly American priest of remote English or Irish ancestry will come forward as spokesman for ethnics of altogether different origin and background. If Oscar Handlin is right, as he probably is, in asserting in these pages ("Group Life Within the American Pattern," November 1949) that "the influence of ethnic origin . . . extends also deep into the lives of folk for whom the decisive migration [was] made by ancestors many generations back, it must be added that characteristically and increasingly this influence comes to expression through the religious community." But then the religious community itself, as a social institution, tends to "revolve about an ethnic rather than a dogmatic axis."

II

THE religious community we have been describing is a complex structure with aspects both sociological and religious.

Sociologically, as we have seen, the religious community has emerged under com-

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pelling circumstances to serve as a context of self-identification and social location in contemporary American life. "Religious community" in this usage refers not so much to the particular denominations, of which there are scores in this country, but to the three great divisions, Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. (In some parts of the country, where there are very few Catholics and Jews, social location may be established in terms of the major Protestant denominations.) America is indeed, in Mrs. Kennedy's terminology, the land of the "triple melting pot," for it is within these three religious communities that the process of ethnic and cultural integration so characteristic of American life takes place. Only George R. Stewart's term "transmuting pot" would perhaps be more appropriate than "melting pot," since in each of these communities, though what emerges is a "new man," he is cast and recast along the same traditional "American" ideal type. It is our general conformity to this ideal type that makes us all Americans; it is our membership in one of a diversity of religious communities that gives us our distinctive place in American society. And in the basic diversity of religious community most other diversities tend to be defined and expressed.

We can restate all this by saying that, while the unity of American life is indeed a unity in multiplicity, the pluralism that this implies is of a very special kind. America recognizes no permanent national or cultural minorities; what Europe knows under this head are in this country regarded as foreign-language or foreign-culture groups whose separateness is merely temporary, the consequence of recent immigration. Woodrow Wilson was sociologically wrong when he said that "America does not consist of groups"; of a certain kind of groups it does indeed consist. But he was surely reflecting the American's understanding of himself when he added: "A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular *national* group in America has not yet become an American."

America does indeed know and acknowledge the separateness of so-called minority "races," but such separateness has always been associated with some degree of segregation and relegation to an inferior status. To the American mind an ethnic group that becomes permanent and self-perpetuating and resists cultural assimilation—in other words, what the European would call a "national-cultural" minority—would be regarded as an alien "race" and be confronted with the same problems and difficulties as face the Negroes and men and women of Oriental ancestry in this country. The only kind of separateness or diversity that America recognizes as permanent, and yet also as involving no status of inferiority, is the diversity or separateness of religious community.

For all its wide variety of regional, ethnic, and other differences, America today may be conceived, as it is indeed conceived by most Americans, as one great community divided into three big sub-communities religiously defined, all equal and all equally American in their identification with the "American Way of Life." For the third generation, which somehow wishes to "remember" a background that the second generation was anxious to "forget," and which is concerned with finding its place in the larger community but not at the expense of its Americanness, this tripartite structure of American society into religious communities is most welcome and intelligible. And no wonder, since it has been the work largely of this third generation.

Just as sociologically we may describe America as one great community divided into three big sub-communities, religiously we might describe Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism in America as three great branches or divisions of "American religion." The assumption underlying the view shared by most Americans, at least at moments when they think in "non-sectarian" terms, is not so much that the three religious communities possess an underlying theological unity, which of course they do, but rather that they are three diverse representations of the same "spiritual values" American democracy is presumed to stand for (the father-

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hood of God and brotherhood of man, the dignity of the individual human being, etc.). At bottom, that is why no one is expected to change his religion as he becomes American;* since each of the religions is equally and authentically American, the American is expected to express his religious affirmation in that form which has come to him with his family and ethnic heritage. Particular denominational affiliations and loyalties within each of the communities (only Protestantism and Judaism come into question here, since Catholicism has no inner denominational lines) are not necessarily denied, or even depreciated, but they are held to be distinctly secondary.

All this has far-reaching consequences for the place of religion in the totality of American life. With the religious community as the primary context of self-identification and social location, and with Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism held to be three culturally diverse representations of the same "spiritual values," it becomes virtually mandatory for the American to place himself in one or another of these groups. It is not external pressure but inner necessity that compels him. For being a Protestant, a Catholic, or a Jew is understood as the specific way, and increasingly perhaps the only way, of being an American and locating oneself in American society. It is something that does not in itself necessarily imply actual affiliation with a particular church, participation in religious activities, or even the affirmation of any definite creed or belief; it implies merely identification and social location. A convinced atheist, or an eccentric American who adopts Buddhism or Yoga, may identify himself to himself in terms of his anti-religious ideology or exotic cult, although it is more than likely that a Yankee turned Buddhist would still be regarded as a "Protestant," albeit admittedly a queer one. But such people are few and far between in this country. By and large, all forms of self-identification and social location other than this religious one are either (like regional background) peripheral and obsolescent, or else (like ethnic diversity) subsumed under the broader head of religious community. Not to be a Catholic, a Protestant, or a Jew today is, for increasing numbers of American people, not to be anything, not to have a *name;* and we are all, as David Riesman points out, in *Individualism Reconsidered,* "afraid of chaotic situations in which [we] do not know [our] own names, [our] 'brand' names. . . ." To have a name and an identity, one must belong somewhere; and more and more one "belongs" in America by belonging to a religious community, which tells one *what* he is.

*This does not mean that *every* religion is so regarded. All religions, of course, enjoy equal freedom and protection under the Constitution, but not all are felt to be really American and therefore to be retained with Americanization. The Buddhism of Chinese and Japanese immigrants, for example, is definitely felt to be something foreign in a way that Lutheranism, or even Catholicism, never was.

III

In the light of these considerations, one is moved to reflect on the curious nature of the religious revival under way in this country. For at the same time that there has been such a revival, a pronounced "trend toward secularism" is evident about which Oscar Handlin and others have written. How does it come about that Americans today are, in one way, more religious than they have been for a long time and are becoming increasingly so, and yet, in other ways, are more remote from the centrality of Jewish-Christian faith than perhaps they have ever been? On one level at least, the answer would seem to be that the American religious revival—indicated by a notable increase in religious identification, affiliation, and membership—is a reflection of the social necessity of "belonging," and today the context of "belonging" is increasingly the religious community. No suggestion of insincerity is here implied, nor does what I have said preclude the operation of other factors lying closer to the heart of faith. Those who identify themselves religiously and join churches as a way of naming and locating themselves

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socially are not cynical unbelievers shrewdly manipulating false labels. They mean what they say when they call themselves Protestants, or Catholics, or Jews; it is the problem of the student of religious life to define just what it is they mean. And compounded with this underlying factor of social identification, though not always in harmony with it, there may well be other factors more authentically religious in the theological sense. In any case, it is now possible to understand how a religious revival resting on such a basis may be quite compatible with the prevalence and even growth of secularism. In a subsequent article, I shall attempt to evaluate religion in America, which has here been described more or less sociologically, in the perspective of faith.

IN MY BEGINNINGS

ARTHUR GELLER

My language must be right
To clear shadows long frightening
Lives rooted deep in mine.
Where is the beginning?

Of my father's father there is little I have.
I recall a dying old man in bed
Laughing with a four-year boy;
With I felt no rage or dread.
One aunt says he was a kind, gracious man
Who never struck a child;
Anger showed only in his eyes,
While voice and manner were always mild.

My mother's father, religious man
Sternly raised nine sons and daughters.
All rejected his Jewish God
But believed feared wonders
Might still be done.
I see my grandfather on the ship,
Brought across the ocean, alone
And dreaming, in the grip
Of his bitter will that would concede
Only ignorance of ways.
Children with forgotten desires, frightened
of tears,
A son in an evil cause; so he pays
The costs of an austere pride.
What strength had he
So devoted to his God?
Eleven years dead, his family trade
Habits of meeting, talk, and aid.

Both my parents born in Europe
But came to the city young,
To East Side streets unprepared
And crushed by the Babel of tongue.

Marriage of my parents made on earth.
The rages and indifference of their home
Where neither could easily give or take
Spoiled their lives and the life to come.
My mother's fury and contempt
Restrained by shyness, succeeded,
Exploded on my father—
Dulled, childlike in what he needed
—And drove him from the house.
My mother loved me and I assumed her
hate.
Only now have I ceased cursing;
My father ten years dead, it is too late.

Childhood of depression and shame.
We lived with my mother's sisters,
Two, unmarried, impatient at mean work,
A jealous house; I soothed my blisters
By dreaming brilliant joys.

None knew or cared what I wished to caress;
Fearful, I failed to mark the nearby streets,
But found a city of my own,
though fatherless.

These rooted images have curious power.
They gather in my memory's dance
Unwitting of beginning or end.
Their movement brings life and chance.

THIS is the first poem that we print by ARTHUR GELLER, who was born in New York City and lives there. He was educated at City College and Columbia University.

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ISRAEL'S GREAT FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE

The Crisis Mood Continues

W. Z. LAQUEUR

UNNOTICED by an outside world very much preoccupied in other quarters, a foreign policy debate of unusual scope has been under way for some months now in Israel. It has involved a tremendous amount of discussion, both vocal and printed—and perhaps even some thinking. This debate is not directly connected with any specific current event or development; foreign affairs have certainly not played a major role in the Histadrut and Knesset election campaigns. But perhaps "debate" is not the right word since what is taking place is more like a series of uncoordinated monologues.

No important idea or argument has emerged in the course of all this discussion that was not heard as long as a year or two ago. One is reminded of the China debate in the United States in which it came to be assumed that the changes in the Far East since the Second World War were for the most part, if not exclusively, the consequence of the acts of certain American statesmen, and not due to factors over which the West had little control. In Israel the deterioration of the country's position in foreign affairs over the last five or six years is in a similar way attributed solely to the fact that somebody high up bungled matters. I do not know about China, but such an assumption is surely wrong so far as Israel is concerned.

Indeed, the supposition that Israel's foreign situation has greatly deteriorated is itself open to question. The current pessimism seems as exaggerated as was the confidence in 1947-48 in continued international support for Israel. It is an unfortunate tendency in Israeli political thinking to shuttle between Seventh Heaven and bleak despair; eight years of statehood have not sufficed to promote a temperate, balanced view of things. But the great political debate now raging in the country, however incorrect most of its assumptions, analyses, and conclusions may be, is a *fact*. Several different main lines of argument have emerged in it and it is the purpose of this article to describe and explain them.

THE first line, which urges *rapprochement* with the "camp of socialism, progress, and peace," is certainly not a new one. Its proponents are, of course, the Communists, Mapam to a large extent; and to a lesser extent Ahdut Avoda. The details of rhetoric do not differ greatly from those used in Paraguay or Celebes, and need not be repeated here. Those who support this line labor under great difficulties. Communism in Israel calls for peace with the Arabs and for acceptance of the Arab League's demands for frontier changes that would require Israel to give up something like more than half her present territory. The Communist parties in the Arab countries have come out strongly for the Egyptian-Saudian-Syrian military alliance with its avowed anti-Israeli character. At the same time the Partisans of Peace, at their recent April meeting in New Delhi,

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Is ISRAELI public opinion over-preoccupied with her foreign policy? This is the fundamental question that WALTER ZE'EV LAQUEUR tries to answer; the results of the recent Knesset elections take nothing away from the pertinence of his observations. Mr. Laqueur was until lately political commentator for the Israeli radio station. He was born in Breslau, Germany, in 1921, and came to Palestine in 1938. He has written for numerous periodicals in the United States and elsewhere, and a book by him, *Nationalism and Communism in the Middle East*, is to be published shortly in this country. At present Mr. Laqueur is on a prolonged visit to England.

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denounced the "aggressive ruling circles in Israel" while finding no aggressiveness whatsoever in Cairo, Damascus, or Ryad. Chou En-lai, the Chinese prime minister, saw fit during the Bandung Conference to receive the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem and promise him his full support. In the UN Security Council, the Soviet attitude to such issues as free Israeli access to the Suez Canal or the Lake Huleh project development has been unfriendly if not downright hostile. All this—and the list could be lengthened—makes it rather difficult to call for an "Eastern orientation" in Israel these days.

More plausible and more influential is the neutralist line in Israel. It is the one taken by Ahdut Avoda and occasionally favored in *Zmanim,* the organ of the Progressives (a good bourgeois party despite its name). But neutralists can be found in many other parties, too, and perhaps even in some official quarters. Neutralism certainly does not mean anti-Westernism in this context. On the contrary, it is argued that Israeli relations with the West will be improved by a neutralist policy. Israel sought an alliance with the West—so the argument runs—but was cold-shouldered, while the Arabs' neutralist line has paid handsome dividends. Aren't the conclusions obvious? The Western orientation has brought a long succession of diplomatic rebuffs, together with isolation and insecurity, and it might eventually make Israel the victim of a Middle Eastern Munich; anything would be better than that. So the neutralists argue.

The "Asian orientation" that is advanced against Israel's Western alignment, though frequently but not always coupled with neutralism, of which it is a kind of variant, is not so easy to defend nowadays. Yet it is comprised of some sound ideas that serve as a healthy corrective to certain parochial tendencies in Zionism. It is often forgotten that the first and second generations of Zionist leaders were preoccupied with Western Europe and the United States; for many of them the Arabs hardly existed, and the Far East not at all. Since then China, India, and other Asian countries have emerged as active and important forces in world affairs.

Little understanding and even less support for Israel is found in the Orient, as the Bandung Conference showed. But there is a good reason for this. Whatever good will Israel does have in the West is the result of many years of intensive effort; such an effort has not been made in the non-Arab East, which rests in its original ignorance of things Jewish. After the founding of Israel, a number of consulates were opened in Asia: it is clear that something on a much larger scale is needed to present Israel's case.

IF THE advocates of the "Asian Orientation" went no further than to make this point, there would be no quarrel with them. But many of them do not stop there, but go on to proclaim, in sweeping and very muddled terms, the advantages of an alliance with the new Asia. Israel, they say, is a part of Asia geographically, and must find her way into the family of Asian nations. What is forgotten is that Jerusalem is at least three times as far from Bandung as from Rome or Paris. And what is even more important, the fact that there is no more one big, happy Asian family than there is "One World"—or "One Europe"—is disregarded. When pressed, the "Asia-Firsters" in Israel are ready to exclude Communist China, North Korea, and Viet Minh from their list, the likelihood of an Israeli *rapprochement* with these countries obviously being very dim. Still, they argue that the establishment of normal relations with these countries would do no harm. They are ready, or readier, to loosen connections with pro-Western nations of Asia like Thailand and the Philippines with whom Israel already has relations but whose role in world affairs is limited.

Then you have the Colombo powers. Among these, Indonesia and Pakistan are decidedly unfriendly to Israel because of their Moslem affiliations and alignments (plus the strong Communist influence in the former country); this means there is little hope for improvement of relations in that direction. And it also means that, in the last resort, "Asia" boils down, for the "Asia-Firsters,"

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to India, Ceylon, and Burma. Relations with Burma are good, those with India and Ceylon normal, yet Nehru has repeatedly postponed the exchange of diplomatic envoys between India and Israel.

But on what could closer relations between India and Israel be based? India needs the Arab countries as a counterweight to Pakistan's alignment with the West. Nor are India, Burma, and Ceylon complementary to Israel's economy. Trade agreements are desirable but inevitably artificial in a situation in which to a large extent they serve purely political rather than economic ends. It may be fascinating to find parallels between the development of Jewish tradition and the classical culture of the peoples of the Far East, but it is an open question whether these traditions have much of an impact on present-day life either in Israel or the Far East, and whether they have any bearing at all on contemporary politics. All this would go to show that the "Asian orientation" simply cannot stand up under close scrutiny; however sound some of its ideas, these are not enough to make it a viable alternative to Israel's present foreign policy.

A THIRD line of argument is hardly more serious. Aired occasionally in the General Zionists' *Haboker*, it holds that Israel should have adhered more closely to the West; she should have established diplomatic relations with Spain; she should not have voted in favor of Lybian statehood; Mr. David Hacohen, the Israeli ambassador to Burma, should not have given an interview favorable to Communist China upon his return from a visit to Peking earlier this year —and so on. During the last couple of years or so, those who voice such criticism have been able to offer a half dozen examples of what should and what should not have been done, and occasionally they may even have been right. But all this concerns very minor issues, explains nothing that happened in the past, and does not indicate an alternative for the future.

A variant school of thought, whose organ is *Ha'aretz*, is perhaps more deserving of consideration. This views the deterioration in Israel's international position as a concomitant of "activist policy"—i.e. the acts of retaliation from Kibya to Gaza. One may agree that such acts of retaliation are not only blameworthy, but frequently ineffectual to boot, but without arriving at the same conclusions. Even had Israeli soldiers never returned the fire from across the borders and never counter-attacked, Arab propaganda would still have branded Israel as the "aggressor," and since that propaganda issues from four or five capitals, and the Israeli case from only one, and since the United Nations investigation teams have to remain "neutral" in order to keep going, world opinion would still have given Israel an equal share—if not more—of the blame for the border clashes. This may sound cynical, but it is the view of most people in Israel; all the evidence (above all, the wooing of the Arab governments by both West and East, as so frequently demonstrated in the Security Council) seems to indicate that it is fairly close to reality.

The last line of argument in the foreign policy debate in Israel maintains that the Israeli information services have failed and that, generally speaking, Israel's Foreign Ministry has not been equal to its task. This criticism cuts across party lines and is perhaps most frequently voiced in the General Zionist and Mizrachi newspapers. It is quite true that when the Israeli Foreign Ministry was established in 1948 it was largely a stopgap affair. People were sometimes taken into it by mere accident, and stayed there thanks to bureaucratic inertia. But on the whole there is no reason to assume that Israel's Foreign Ministry is better or worse than similar institutions in other countries. The Israeli information services have suffered from a serious lack of coordination on the highest levels, but some slight progress appears to have been made of late. (It is quite impossible to treat this problem at length within the scope of the present article.) Even so, the general assumption that diplomats and, more specifically, propagandists—for the main criticism is directed against

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the latter—can change basic political facts seems to me to be a gross exaggeration, to say the very least. Opposition to Israel in the United States, for instance, may at times be due to lack of information, but the American opponents of Israel who really matter surely do not lack for information about her. The existence of Israel works against their specific interests, and no amount of skillful propaganda can change that. The progressive disintegration of the Arab world, the loss of oil fields, pipe lines, or bases might convince them, but not propaganda. Successful propaganda could probably attenuate the existing anti-Israel trend, but certainly could not overcome it.

Such, then, are the arguments most frequently heard in the Israeli foreign policy debate. More eccentric views than these are voiced, but do not merit attention. The important question is, of course, the degree to which these symptoms and reactions reflect the true picture.

ANY proper survey of Israel's foreign affairs begins and ends with her relations with the Arab countries. All observers agree that these relations may persist for many years to come in their present negative state, with or without a "second round." Peace was possible in 1948-49, but the opportunity was let slip, mainly, it would appear, through the fault of the West. At present the Arab governments are only willing to make peace, if at all, on the terms of the 1947 UN resolution, which they themselves nullified by their invasion of Palestine. Complaints heard from time to time in the Israeli press to the effect that the West (meaning the U.S.) should, and could, somehow compel the Arab rulers to agree to peace by exerting pressure in the Arab capitals appear very naive. Equally naive, in this writer's opinion, is the idea that making Israel and the Arabs collaborate on some development project (e.g. the Johnston plan), however worthwhile such projects may be in and of themselves, can be a way of eventually achieving peace. This could never work in the framework of Middle Eastern realities, where politics comes first; Arab-Israeli relations form an issue that can be solved only on the political (or political *cum* military) level.

And yet there is some ground for a very guarded optimism. At this point I must myself leave the realm of political facts, although reluctantly. There are signs, few and far between, that, first, the Arab rulers and large sections of the politically conscious and active public in the Arab countries have got used to the idea of the existence of a Jewish state (though not as yet to its present borders); and, second, that the Palestine question, which has overshadowed all other political issues in recent years in the Middle East, is increasingly being relegated to a secondary place. This does not mean that the Arabs have given up altogether the idea of a solution by force, or that the West may not indeed precipitate a new war by destroying the present balance of power in the Middle East.

Such a war, whatever its outcome, would almost certainly result in the emergence of one or two "popular democracies" in Middle Eastern style. It may be true, moreover, that one or two Arab governments are toying with the idea of a "Middle Eastern Munich," as some of the more excitable Israeli observers call it—that is, the amputation from Israel of the Negev and perhaps other territories. But whereas Hitler could take what he wanted because he had the superior military strength to do it, the Arab governments, unable to do the threatening themselves, would have to rely on the help of the Western powers to get them what they want. Advocates of such a "Munich" may be found in the capitals of the West, but the Arabs cannot really expect more than platonic support. This means that they have to continue to rely on economic and political boycotting, which, though costly and irritating to Israel, will not do her any permanent harm. This the Arabs are slowly beginning to realize. Were it not for the refugee problem, a reconciliation would appear to be a probability today, albeit a distant one.

Even if Israel did not exist, something like it would have had to be invented in

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order to draw off some of the Arab steam. Arab statesmen will continue to argue that "Israel is the main danger," but many signs have appeared by now that they do not really believe it any longer. The Iraqi-Egyptian rift, and in general the Middle East's preoccupation with intra-Arab affairs, are such signs. All this suggests that the present "coexistence" in the Middle East will be replaced by something more lasting. Indeed, the chances for such a development in the Middle East are greater perhaps than in the world at large. The passage of time alone may do much to bridge over the present gap between Israel and the Arab countries. This, admittedly, is not the only eventuality one can foresee—it is not hard to imagine less agreeable ones; but in spite of all the heat it generates, the Israeli-Arab dispute does seem easier to resolve than those larger, deeper-going conflicts and oppositions which take the whole world for their stage.

ISRAELI relations with the Communist East have become normal again; in fact, they have improved considerably by comparison with Stalin's last days. Yet Russia has frequently supported Arab against Israeli interests, both in the Security Council and elsewhere. This has been quite evident with regard to the present Syrian government, which is neutralist and largely influenced by the local Communist party, and to a lesser degree with regard to Egypt. From Moscow's point of view, such policy makes sense. A country like Syria offers very tangible prospects (more, in fact, than mere *prospects*) for Communism in the Middle East. Israel, on the other hand, is very nearly a hopeless case in this respect. The local Communists have perhaps made some headway in the *ma'abarot*, among the more backward of the new immigrants, who are not yet firmly rooted in the country. But what can one hope for from a "proletarian mass party" that, after thirty-five years of existence, still gets less than 5 per cent of the votes in *trade union* elections (as compared with 7 per cent in the first Histadrut elections back in 1920). Therefore it is only natural that Moscow should curry the more promising favor of the Arabs. Nonetheless, there is no danger, from Israel's point of view, that the Kremlin will go all out in backing the Arab countries against her. Soviet policy has shown itself fully aware both of the real relations of strength in the Middle East, and of the importance of Jewish public opinion in Western Europe, America, and, *mirabile dictu*, even at home. There has been a project in the offing to revive somehow or other the anti-fascist Jewish Committee of 1941-48 vintage, and West-East Jewish conferences are going to be staged; all this presupposes some sort of neutral attitude in the dispute between Israel and the Arab states.

For the rest, there have been a number of minor incidents that tend to show that there has been no basic change in the Soviet attitude. In cultural relations, Moscow has steadfastly opposed the principle of reciprocity. Israel has been faced with practical ultimatums in order to make her receive Soviet cultural missions which participate in local Communist rallies so partisan in character that they are boycotted even by Mapam fellow-travelers. Two Israeli writers were permitted to visit the Soviet Union, but the reports written subsequently by one of them, Haim Shorer, editor of *Davar*, the Histadrut daily, were bitterly resented by his hosts. The other writer, Leah Goldberg, a literary figure and lifelong Mapam sympathizer, went to Russia as the member of the Democratic Women's Delegation (which was completely Communist-dominated), against the advice of Mapam, which is second to none in its enthusiasm for the USSR. On her return, Miss Goldberg published a very favorable account of her experiences in Russia, but she was tactless enough to remark that the simple and practical Stockholm subway had impressed her more than the florid architecture of the Moscow one. This was enough to make her the target of violent attack ("Objective Poison" was one of the headlines in the Tel Aviv Communist daily *Kol Ha'am*), which indicated how little things had really

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changed. There were more such straws in the wind. The new Israeli envoy to Moscow, Brigadier Yosef Avidar, was attacked in *Kol Ha'am* before he had arrived at the Soviet capital; it is most unlikely that the paper's editors would have dared to do this on their own initiative. *Pravda* complained about the amnesty granted this summer to a group of youngsters in Israel who had been convicted in 1953 of terrorist acts against the state (being suspected, among other things, of trying to blow up the Soviet Embassy in Tel Aviv at the time of the Moscow "doctors' plot"). The Israeli Foreign Ministry in each of these instances tried very hard to explain its case to Moscow, and the faintly apologetic tone it sounded was hardly helpful. After the amnesty, the Israeli envoy in Moscow went to the Soviet Foreign Ministry in order to "clarify" matters—but the Soviet foreign minister had not found it necessary to consult Israel about the release of Nazi war criminals imprisoned by the Russians. Foreign Minister Sharett had stressed in a letter to Molotov back in June 1953, when diplomatic ties between Israel and the USSR were reestablished, that Israel would not adhere to any "aggressive anti-Soviet bloc." No such assurance has been given by the Soviet Union on its side. Nevertheless, Israeli-Russian relations were and have remained normal. Several dozen Soviet citizens (most of them over sixty years of age, coming from the Czernovitz-Kishinev area) have been permitted to join close relatives in Israel. This, after the total cessation of immigration from Red Europe between 1937 and 1953, received much attention in Israel, and was regarded in some quarters as a new and important departure. But only if this dribble becomes a stream will it deserve to be considered a major political factor in Israeli-Russian relations.

RELATIONS with the satellites have been much the same except, perhaps, for Czechoslovakia, which has refused to this day to release the Mapam member Mordecai Oren, of Prague trial fame, who was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment in October 1953. Yet last autumn Czechoslovakia freed another Israeli citizen, M. Orenstein, who likewise had appeared as a "witness" at the Prague trial and had been given a life sentence. Some of the satellite countries have gone to great lengths to revive their "friendship leagues" in Israel, inviting Israeli artists, musicians, athletes, and even an occasional journalist to visit them. Though Communist leaders in Eastern Europe openly admitted in talks with visitors that their attitude towards Israel, Zionism, and emigration had not changed, a number of gestures of good will were made, such as the liberation of some—but not all—of the Jewish leaders who had been jailed in Rumania, and the release of some arrested employees of the Israeli legations in Warsaw and Budapest. At the same time aged people with close relatives in Israel were permitted to emigrate.

All in all, 68 immigrants have entered Israel from the Soviet Union, and 182 from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary since the beginning of 1954. A fairly representative Israeli official delegation visited Communist China early this year. Some of its members appear to have accepted the Chinese sales talk without the required reservations, and on their return spoke in glowing terms of the vast prospects for Israeli exports to China. Since then, however, nothing more has happened, but through no fault of Israel. Hardly anybody there would object to doubling exports—and in any case strategically important goods are not involved.

NO NEW important developments have taken place in Israel's relations with the West for some time now. The old dilemmas persist, and some have become even more acute. Perhaps Washington and also London now understand better than before that Israel has real cause to feel concerned about Western policy in the Middle East, in view of the absence of any solid guarantees that the arms provided the Arab states will not be used against Israel—and, what is worse, in view of the refusal to supply similar arms to Israel.

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The conviction is gaining ground that something must be done to obtain such guarantees for Israel—and not only on paper—but no tangible proposals have yet emerged. A reported British plan for Israel to cede part of the Negev to Jordan, and receive part of the "Triangle" in return, still remains a very shadowy thing. This would join Jordan to Egypt by land and rid the former of some of its contumacious Palestinian Arabs. Similar plans, more precise and more official, may be in the offing, but there have been so many plans and projects involving Palestine and Israel during the last thirty years that people have grown wary about taking them seriously. In the end, it has always worked out differently, and never in accordance with the blueprints.

All in all, the realization is slowly gaining ground that it is no use bewailing the happy days of 1948. The international power relations that then favored Israel were a piece of luck, a temporary conjunction of circumstances that for many reasons could not last. It avails little to lament Israel's present isolation, and no panacea for it exists. Isolation in itself is not fatal; what is dangerous is its psychological effect on people, who might lose their nerve and demand a showdown or an abrupt and radical reorientation of policy. This is one of the symptoms of claustrophobia. No decision can be forced, and Israelis have almost as much to fear from alarmist speeches and editorials as from external threats.

Too many people in Israel have worried for too long about foreign policy, whose primacy may be appropriate in the affairs of a great power; in a small country, however, such obsessive preoccupation with external politics can only do harm. Just now attention to more urgent domestic affairs would have a salutary effect. Since the possibilities of Israeli foreign policy are very limited anyway, there is little to lose in averting attention from it. Domestic development may not be the road to glory, but there is very little glory to be won in any case in the world of the 1950's. One day the citizens of Israel may be able modestly to echo Abbé Sieyès who after the French Revolution, the Consulate, and the Empire, in answer to the question, "And what did you do all those years?" said, "Well, sir, I lived."

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THE DILEMMAS OF WESTERN AID TO FREE ASIA

Some Unsolved Problems of Modernization

G. L. ARNOLD

BY THE beginning of September it will be ten years since the Japanese surrender signalized the failure of Japan's attempt to build an empire in Southern and Eastern Asia. The subsequent more or less rapid liquidation of almost all British, Dutch, and French territorial holdings in that vast region, and the establishment of national states in the wake of this twofold upheaval, constitute a change as great as the parallel rise of Communism in China. It is therefore not unnatural that Western spokesmen should feel bewildered when told by Asian nationalists that the struggle against "colonial imperialism" is still high on the Asian agenda. It is even less surprising that concern over this kind of reasoning should be greatest in the United States, where it has long been an article of faith that Americanism and imperialism are incompatible, and that any suggestion to the contrary is imputable either to ignorance or to malevolence. The indignation with which most American commentators greeted the display of Communist tactics at the recent Bandung Conference (April 18-24) of Asian and African states is proof that a certain innocence continues to prevail in regard to what Asians mean by "colonialism." It seems to be accepted that this term refers to something of which Americans have been guilty, if at all, only in the Philippines, and then only for a relatively short time. At most it is conceded that Asian intellectuals may have a certain case on the score of racial arrogance—now rapidly disappearing in the new climate created by the UN (where nevertheless, it might seem to an Asian that China, India, and Japan are scarcely given their due weight).

Political and intellectual traditions combine to render difficult a preliminary agreement as to what is intended when Asian nationalists (who are not in all cases repeating Communist slogans) assert that the main fight is still against the legacy of colonialism. The moralistic strain in our culture inclines us to believe that people who talk in this fashion must be suffering from an inherited sense of grievance. Certainly Asian intellectuals have not forgotten such things as the "Indians not allowed" notices in clubs, the "No dogs or Chinese" notices in the parks of the treaty ports, or even President Wilson's veto on a Japanese-sponsored clause prescribing racial equality in the League of Nations. But when Communist and non-Communist delegates at a gathering of twenty-nine Asian, Middle Eastern, and African states are able to agree on a formula, however watered down, which implicitly declares "colonialism" to be the overriding issue, there must be something more behind it than memories of Anglo-Saxon arrogance in the bad old days now happily gone. Reporters who found comfort in the thought that Chou En-lai did not quite dominate the proceedings, that Nehru was frequently ill at ease, and that a bloc of delegates led by

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FREE Asia's problems are more complicated, and demand less simple solutions, than most right-minded people in this country and Western Europe seem to think. As Herbert Luethy indicated in our June issue ("What Western Colonialism Gave to Asia"), the after-effects of colonialism are by no means to be characterized in the standard black and white terms of "anti-imperialist" liberalism. G. L. ARNOLD is, of course, familiar to COMMENTARY's readers. His last contribution to these pages was in May 1955 with "The Course Ahead for European Socialism." Mr. Arnold lives in London. A book on politics by him is shortly to appear in this country under Dial Press's imprint.

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Turkey clung to their NATO lifebelt, were quite evidently prepared for the worst. That it did not happen is no reason for disregarding the danger signs, of which there are several.

One of the difficulties about colonialism is that it tends to be made an excuse for Asia's own failings. There are Filipino politicians (though they were kept away from Bandung) who maintain that the troubles of their country arise from imperialist exploitation on the part of the United States. On the face of it this charge seems not merely unfounded but patently absurd. It can easily be demonstrated that the United States has sunk immense sums of money in the Philippines, and that the islands have benefited immeasurably. It is likewise evident that Spain never did anything for the country, at any rate in the economic field. Yet it is probable that in the end Spain will be found to have left deeper traces—religious, cultural, social. True, the Spanish legacy included landlordism, peonage, and other forms of social inequality. But these were not removed by the Americans, who contented themselves with bringing more land under cultivation to feed an expanding population. The wretched condition of the peasantry, which underlay the postwar Hukbalahap risings under Communist leadership, was not the fault of the American administration. American policy in those dim, distant, pre-MacArthur days, merely did nothing to change the old pattern. There is thus material for endless argument over the role of the United States in creating, or failing to prevent, a condition of affairs which eventually led to something like civil war, and which is only now being slowly and painfully corrected by the Magsaysay government (with some belated American backing). Whether one chooses to call this laissez-faire policy "colonialism" or not is a terminological question. What matters is that the new generation of Asian nationalists are intent on a democratic revolution against the old regime under which landlord and moneylender controlled an impoverished peasantry: a regime which flourished under foreign rule. The same nationalists are quite happy to welcome Western support in their present task or, failing that, Russian. It was therefore a little naive on the part of some American observers at Bandung to expend so much energy on the subject of Russian territorial encroachments in Asia. Most of these encroachments have been at the expense of China, and the Chinese are quite capable of taking care of themselves. For the rest, one may be sure that no amount of Russian (or American) intervention will ever be stigmatized as "colonialism" or "imperialism," provided it is not directed towards sustaining the old social order that allowed foreigners to share the spoils of an operation in which the lion's share went to the native ruling classes. These latter currently subsidize a certain degree of shallow "anti-Communism" that is about as dangerous to Moscow and Peking as flypaper to a rhinoceros. The real opponents of Communism have to be sought elsewhere.

If the Philippines are a doubtful case, Indonesia by contrast exemplifies most clearly what can happen to an Asian country under the paternal rule of a benevolent imperial power. On this subject it may be well to let an expert speak:

> Java is an extremely interesting example of how dangerous European ideas and techniques can be to a non-European society if the government is concerned to preserve the values and the way of life of the society whose balance the very existence of a Western government is all the time subverting. Dutch law and order, and Dutch medical services, were mostly responsible for the phenomenal increase in the population of Java after 1815. The Dutch concern for the happiness the Javanese found in their traditional culture, and the Dutch failure to provide Java with institutions by which the Javanese might have adapted themselves to the new ways of thought and action of the Western world, are almost equally responsible for the failure of the Javanese community to find new ways of employing the extra people who were so constantly coming into the labor market. The result has been that after 150 years of the most paternal and, in some ways, the most understanding government in Asia, the Javanese have

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the lowest income per head in Asia, with the possible exception of China.

The lesson which Javanese history has to teach is enforced by a comparison with Japan. The men who governed Japan between 1868 and Pearl Harbor were frequently aggressive and usually ruthless, yet the standard of living of the Japanese common man improved steadily. The men who governed Java in the same period were mostly imbued wtih the idea that the function of government is the promotion of the welfare of its citizens. Yet the standard of life of the average Javanese declined steadily. It is not enough for a government to be well-intentioned. It has also got to understand that increases in population are bound to mean decreases in well-being, unless the new hands can find new jobs to do, and in Asia it has to realize that the jobs will not be created spontaneously by the peasant community itself.*

Overpopulation is of course only one aspect of a process which by now has disrupted the old stability of village life all over Asia. In principle, the growth of population could have been at least partly met by a rapid expansion of farm output. The noteworthy point in this context is that such an expansion did indeed take place—in Japan, which happened to be the only major Asian country to escape foreign domination! To cite again from the same writer: "The difference between, say, Japanese and Indian outputs is the difference between an agriculture which has been transformed by the impact of Western science and one which continues unchanged in the old peasant ways." This point should be of special interest to Americans, for there is no question that the Philippine peasant economy remained unchanged after 1900, so that impoverishment, overcrowding, and the relentless pressure of the landlords finally brought about conditions which enabled the Communist-led Hukbalahaps to mount their insurrection. As for Indonesia, every day brings fresh news of political turmoil in Holland's ancient colony, which now boasts one of the largest and most active Communist movements in the world—a movement so powerful that the reigning Nationalist government has found it expedient to conclude an uneasy alliance with it. At Bandung the Indonesian delegates not surprisingly were in the forefront of all attempts to establish a Communist-neutralist alliance against "Western colonial imperialism." Thus are the sins of the fathers visited upon their luckless descendants.

*Maurice Zinkin, *Asia and the West* (Institute of Pacific Relations, 1951). This book is still by far the best general introduction to the whole subject.

II

BANDUNG, however, was no more than a skirmish in the cold war. By common consent the battle will be won or lost in the silent tug between China and India—specifically, in the contest for the minds and hearts of people all over Southern Asia. Whatever Nehru and Chou En-lai may think of each other, the Indian and the Chinese example are not merely different but incompatible. If India can show the rest of Asia a way to modernization that is manifestly superior to the Sino-Soviet model, the West will have won the cold war in Southern Asia. If China wins the allegiance of a majority of Asian nationalists, the "positions of strength" so patiently accumulated by the West may have to be evacuated without a shot. It is thus no great exaggeration to say that the outcome of the struggle for Asia hinges on the success or failure of the current experiment in bringing industrialism *and democracy* to India simultaneously. If India were lost, the Western powers might still hope to keep Japan on their side, though for how long no one can tell; but they would have to admit defeat in respect of the land mass of Asia. For in such an event, the case against the democratic modernization of any "backward" country would begin to look conclusive to thinking people in the remaining Asian and Middle Western countries. This is now fairly well understood in West and East alike. It was certainly the biggest issue at Bandung, though from the way it was handled by all concerned one might have thought Nehru's foreign policy was the only thing that mattered either to the Communist delegates or to the neutralist bloc. In reality, the stakes were bigger than that.

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Nehru, it will be remembered, came to Bandung fresh from his quasi-successful intervention in the Andhra election, a contest whose outcome was represented, in India and abroad, as a triumph for his Congress party and a severe setback for the Communists. Consideration of the voting results suggests that in fact the Communists made surprising gains, while Congress barely maintained control of the situation. Compared with the 1951 election, both parties apparently doubled their vote, but the important point is that the total vote for Congress and its allies (other than the Socialists), who this time fought under a joint banner, increased only slightly, while the Communists made heavy gains and the Socialists lost significant ground.*

The net outcome was such as to suggest the possibility that in a few years' time the Communist party may be strong enough to win control of at least one of the federated states of the Indian Union. It could then drive the Federal government into a choice between unconstitutional violence against a state government (an excellent ground for starting civil war) or virtual acceptance of something like a Popular Front. The mere fact that such perspectives are beginning to open before India must have weakened Nehru's position at Bandung, and may have accounted in part for his extreme nervousness which was obvious to those present. Certainly his paper victory in Andhra cannot have impressed the Chinese Communists.†

If Andhra was not exactly a triumph, the result could be attributed to the special economic difficulties of this South Indian state (though the Communists also made gains in its most prosperous parts). Congress politicians are apt to console themselves with the thought that, after all, their party polled 47,839,000 votes in the 1951 general election all over India, against 11,009,000 for the Socialists and a beggarly 5,892,000 for the Communists. They tend to overlook the fact that the decline of the Socialist demagogy throws a much heavier responsibility upon themselves and the government they control. There will soon be nothing left standing between Congress and the Communists, and considering the ease with which a huge semi-literate peasant electorate can be stampeded by threats and promises, future landslides in the Communist direction must be reckoned with. This perspective is beginning to look less fantastic against a background of unfavorable news from the economic front.

To grasp what has been happening in this sphere, let it be recalled that, in the words of a cautious semi-official document published by the International Monetary Fund last year, "the standard of living of the people of India is among the lowest in the world. There is evidence that this standard of living has deteriorated somewhat since the pre-war period. . . . The information that is available seems to suggest that the *per capita* consumption of food grains and cloth

*In absolute figures the Communists polled 2.7 million votes out of a total 8.6 million against 1.4 million in 1951-2, when a total of 7.2 million voted. The United Congress Front, comprising all democratic groups except the Socialists, received 4.3 million against 3.9 million cast separately for Congress and its allies in the previous election. The fact that the Communists lost seats under the very complicated voting procedure is immaterial; under proportional representation they would have gained 59 members in a House of 196, and Congress only 96 instead of 146. The reporting of this election was scandalous, to put it mildly. Most people were left with the impression that Congress had triumphed, whereas in fact it had merely prevented the Communists from capturing a state government. The fact that this outcome was universally hailed as a great victory shows how modest we have become.

†They are even less likely to have been awed by the ridiculous claim that his speeches on foreign policy, plus *Pravda's* friendly reference to his person, were instrumental in swaying the votes of a largely illiterate peasant electorate. Social pressure on the "untouchables" in the villages to back the government and refrain from helping the Communists is more likely to have been effective in holding the Communist vote down. But the reporting of Indian affairs is altogether below even the primitive level otherwise considered normal in most newspaper offices. Witness the grotesque story, solemnly reprinted in dozens of papers, that the peasants in Andhra were shocked by the fall of Malenkov!

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is lower now than in the 1930's."* It was indeed to remedy that decline that the Congress party government in April 1951 introduced its five-year investment program, concerning which an admirer of Nehru wrote in the March issue of the London Royal Institute of International Affairs' monthly, *The World Today*: "The internal condition of India—military weakness, combined with dire peasant poverty—obliges Mr. Nehru to be eclectic. He would be more than human, for instance, if he refrained from calling his new industrial projects a 'Five Year Plan.'" Nehru's critics, on the other hand, would be less than honest if they failed to point out that, by its own standards, the "Five Year Plan" is a failure. It is true that one does not get this impression from official Indian government publications, which tend to harp on the brighter side of things, e.g., the increase in food production, the progress with big irrigation schemes, and the growth of industrial output.†

When it comes to the long perspective, admirers are apt to indulge in flights such as the following:

> The elimination of poverty is a religious [sic] and technical rather than a political problem, State action being agreed on by all parties. In technology, moreover, the free world is advancing far more rapidly than the Communist bloc. A second and more stupendous industrial revolution has already begun in the USA and Western Europe, and the Special Agencies of the United Nations are a political vehicle by which its benefits may be passed on to the underdeveloped countries of the East, without offense to minds suspicious of a new imperialism. The Food and Agriculture Organization, for example, by introducing the Japanese method of growing rice in India, has brought about such an enormous increase in crops that the fear of rice shortage bids fair to be completely banished. The Colombo Plan, by which the USA and Commonwealth countries cooperate technically and financially to help the peoples of South-East Asia to help themselves, will also act as a solvent of old hatreds and old fears (*The World Today*, March 1955).

As against these raptures, one may note the following simple facts, which are now the commonplaces of discussion among professional economists familiar with "the situation."

1) The Five Year Plan aimed at a gross investment rate of about 7 per cent of the national income, which is considerably less than some undeveloped countries, in Latin America and elsewhere, have achieved without much external aid. Communist China is known to have reached a rate of 12 per cent, and to be aiming at 20.

2) Industrial progress has so far not prevented a steady growth in urban unemployment. According to the latest figures, about *one-fifth* of the employable urban working class is without work. For the salaried and professional middle class (the chief reservoir of Communism) the proportion is *one-half*.

3) The recent rise in food output is two-thirds due to a succession of unusually good harvests, which in a monsoon climate cannot be expected to be a regular occurrence.

4) Population is still rising faster than national income. Almost nothing has been done to stem the flood of new babies.

5) Religious conservatism is proving an insurmountable obstacle to the rationalization of agriculture. India's 200 million head of cattle (three-fifths of the world total) are now safer and more useless than ever—a recent law forbids their slaughter. Even the monkeys are still sacred, although they destroy or damage an estimated one and a half million tons of food grain a year!

"It has in the past been customary," writes the gentleman already quoted in *The World Today*, "to sneer at the conservatism with which religion has imbued Indian agriculture. It is now possible that religion itself may bring about changes more profound and far-reaching than the crude confiscation and

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**Economic Development with Stability*. A Report to the Government of India by a Mission of the International Monetary Fund (Washington, D. C., 1954).

†See also the Reserve Bank of India's *Bulletin* for March 1955, where it is stated that the industrial index for November 1954 stood almost 60 per cent above the 1946 base figure, with the upward trend continuing since that date.

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collectivization of Communism. Bhoodan, or voluntary land-giving, is already a great force in India." The trouble with this kind of argument is that it neatly sidesteps the real issue: even assuming a more equitable distribution of land were brought about peacefully (though not altogether by voluntary means: even the Nehru government has enough sense not to rely on that), it would still be necessary to equip the peasant with better tools and a different outlook. The Five Year Plan promises to provide the tools; the new outlook will have to emerge from some kind of cultural revolution. Meanwhile the much touted "religious revival," so far from being spontaneous, is being actively financed by the Birlas and other conservative multi-millionaires as a safeguard against "dangerous thoughts." And "religion" in India implies a way of life in which "cow protection" ranks much higher than improvements in the cow-owner's standard of living.

How inadequate the Plan has proved even on the financial side is evident from every line of the 1954 *Report* of the International Monetary Fund study group—a document which does not err on the side of radicalism. For every economy there is a critical level which must be reached before investment can begin to pay off in the form of higher productivity per individual, i.e. greater efficiency. For India, that level certainly lies above the present investment level of 7 per cent of the gross national income. The *Report* recognizes this when it says that ". . . progress has been slow, too slow, and must now be accelerated. The minimum objective of the Five Year Plan is to restore the economy of India to its pre-war position. In fact it is necessary to go much further and provide the means by which production can be substantially increased, and with it the level of consumption." Yet the *Report* warns that an attempt to go markedly beyond the present investment level may result in inflation, further impoverishment of the salaried middle class, and financial collapse.

The fact is that India's domestic resources have proved inadequate to the modest goals of the Plan, while external aid has not been forthcoming on the requisite scale. Not that the necessary sums would be large by current standards—six or seven hundred million dollars annually, pumped in via American grants and British sterling releases, would probably be enough to close the gap (in the view of responsible British economists now busy with this problem). This is no more than about treble what India is getting, under various forms of aid, at present. It is a remarkable thought that so small an increase could mean the difference between success and failure in the economic program of what is now the most important country of Asia.

But even such an increase could promise success only if the Indian government itself were to help by reducing luxury consumption, increasing taxation, and diverting resources (through moderate and controlled price rises) into those sectors of the economy where they are needed, while avoiding general inflation of the kind now ravaging Indonesia. This is a big "if." On present evidence, Delhi will require some very energetic prodding from Washington if the job is to be done even on the modest scale envisaged by the Planning Commission. Whether such prodding can be expected from the present American administration, with its hankering after balanced budgets and a quiet life all around, is a question that it would be impertinent for a non-American to try to answer. What can be said is this: if present trends are not checked, if investment continues to hover just below the minimum required to lift the economy to a new level, if nothing is done to stem population growth, if religious conservatism thereby obtains a grip on the Congress party, and the radical intelligentsia is thereby driven into a Popular Front mood, engulfing the already split and weakened Socialist party—then one may write India off. It could happen within a decade.

III

What is true of India is substantially true of Pakistan, of Indonesia (except that there the reigning Nationalist clique has al-

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ready opted for inflation and the Popular Front—with the results that are clearly disastrous, but may yet be copied in India), and of Southern Asia generally, with the exception of Japan—a country that had the unusual fortune of being modernized in the last century under the iron control of an entrenched oligarchy. Elsewhere, democracy and industrialism give rise to tensions from which the Communists expect to profit. It is indeed the conviction of present-day Communist parties that they have an infallible recipe for industrializing backward countries faster than their opponents. They have yet to be proved wrong.

Of the several factors entering into the typical Stalinist plan, one—the high rate of capital investment—requires no particular discussion. It is, fortunately, a factor which democratic regimes are quite capable of matching, given a little external help and a resolute policy of austerity and high taxation. The system of totalitarian control over the working class is after all familiar, especially to Asians. Indian Socialists, at least, have no illusions on this subject. Brajkishore Shastri, a leader of the Praja Socialist party, who visited China in the spring of 1953, said in an article reprinted in *Socialist International Information* (January 30, 1954):

> In no circumstances can Chinese workers resort to strike action. Any demand for a reduction in working hours or an increase in wages is regarded as high treason in this workers' state. In India a worker cannot be forced to work more than an eight-hour day. Out of these hours he must have at least half an hour's recess. But in China a twelve-hour day is the rule, and there is of course no recess. . . . The way I saw the Chinese laborers being driven to work (on the Yangtse River valley project) evoked in me a stronger emotion than a desire for emulation or pity. I was horrified. After all, a human being is not a beast. Even for reconstructing his country he should not be used as a tool of convenience.

The reverse side of these admirable sentiments is the Indian Socialist party's failure to work out a democratic alternative to Communist planning and impose it on the Congress high command. Instead we have Asoka Mehta's philosophical reflections (in his pamphlet *Socialism and Peasantry*) on the problem of industrialism in general—reflections whose spirit bears an uncanny resemblance to that of the old Russian Narodniki. This is not necessarily a criticism of what Mr. Mehta and his friends are after: a balanced development with priority given to the needs of the countryside. One merely suspects that, like most democratic socialists, they are not profoundly interested in the problem of political power. For the rest they are of course quite right in pointing out that the Chinese leaders, like their Russian friends and tutors, are chiefly interested in building an economy that can serve as the base of a big arms establishment.

In another vital sphere, that of culture, socialists and other anti-Communists in Asia share a certain sentimental refusal to face realities. The problem of reorienting the population of a backward country towards better ways of living is primarily a cultural one. The totalitarians solve it by stamping out religion. The democrats prefer to avert their gaze from the issue, when they do not actually help to confuse it. In November 1954 the *Hindustan Times,* Nehru's organ, published a letter pointing out that the philosophy of Communism, which was the guiding light of the Chinese leaders, was a negation of Buddhist principles: under the impact of the vast brain-washing process now going on in China, the Buddhist elements in Chinese culture were fast vanishing. Since 1950, some ten million copies of works by Stalin had been published in China, but nothing on Buddhism. . . . Such sentiment is echoed among the intellectual leaders of Indian and Burmese socialism. Now it is probable that Buddhism, for all its philosophical other-worldliness, does not seriously interfere with the mundane tasks that Asian statesmen, like other men, have to shoulder in this vale of tears. It has at any rate not prevented the Buddhist premier of Burma from translating Marx's *Capital* into Burmese!

The case of orthodox Hinduism is quite

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different, and it is not the least use trying to ignore the terrible relevance of this problem. When one considers that India's "untouchables" still number some 60 million out of a population nearing 400 million, that virtually nothing has been done for them—except on paper—since India received independence, and that they are the chief reservoir of the new proletariat living under indescribable conditions in the slums of Bombay and Calcutta; when one further considers that the Congress party is still dominated by the Brahmin element, and that the Communists bend every effort to win over the "untouchables," one glimpses the terrifying forces lying dormant beneath the surface of independent India. One would be wrong to think that the Indian government is unaware of these problems. It has merely shown itself incapable so far of solving them.

The extreme difficulty of touching upon these issues without lapsing into a shallow anti-religious "enlightenment" rationalism can be illustrated by considering, on the other hand, the integrative character of Eastern religion in its social aspect—that aspect which the British in India, like other Westerners elsewhere, so little understood and did so much to weaken. The old Asian religions, which are now losing their hold over men's minds, provided *inter alia* the moral sanction for social arrangements that were a great deal saner than, for example, the utterly destructive and ridiculous system of sham-landlordism introduced by the British in India under the name of Zemindarism: a veritable plague which the Indian government is only now feebly (and none too successfully) trying to get rid of. Under the old dispensation the peasant might be poor, but at least he was in secure possession of his land. There was no nonsense about dispossessing a man for failing to pay the local moneylender. The sacred law was perfectly clear on this point. Manu had said: "The sages who know former times pronounce cultivated land to be the property of him who cut away the wood, or who cleared and tilled it." And the Prophet Mohammed had said: "Whoever gives life to dead land, it is his." Hinduism and Islam, like the Law of Moses, protected the debtor, not the creditor; the peasant, not the moneylender. The impact of the West changed all that. Just as it substituted for the old despots (who might kill a man unjustly, but who certainly did not consider it their business to help the moneylender fleece the peasant) the impersonal authority of law courts empowered to enforce contracts (which the peasant did not understand even if he had signed them), so it replaced the old sacred law by modern Western notions based on the sanctity of legal claims to the peasant's ancestral land. This, not racial arrogance, has been the real curse of "colonialism." By destroying the village community and letting loose all the forces of the market economy, it has impoverished the cultivator just when improved sanitation caused his numbers to multiply. The outcome is written in large letters all over the face of monsoon Asia, and now that "colonialism" has at last collapsed (at any rate in its more obvious aspects) the successor governments are left to struggle with problems no Western country, not even Spain, has ever had to face.

WHAT can be done about it? One thing is certain: "private enterprise" will not help. In fact it may complete the ruin. In India alone, some 50 per cent of profits in private industry are exported, and this sector of the economy is actually expanding faster than the native Indian component. Any aggravation of this unhealthy trend, by way of a massive influx of American and other foreign private capital, such as the ideologists of laissez-faire never cease to urge, would in all likelihood produce a socio-political explosion. When one considers that even from Australia, not exactly a backward country by any definition, some American automobile-makers extract profits of up to 700 per cent, one shudders to think what Western, especially American, "know-how" might do to India if let loose on the private economy. The net result would probably be the collapse of entire branches of Indian-owned industry—just about the last straw needed to break the Congress camel's back.

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Nor will international aid, no matter how large, by itself get these countries over the hump, though it is certainly an essential prerequisite. Such aid will have to be channeled into investment programs which, to be effective, must become one element of a genuine social reformation. This is not a task that outsiders can hope to direct. They can, however, promote it indirectly by supporting whatever native forces seem strong enough to take the lead. In the Philippines a small beginning has recently been made; in Turkey it was made long ago, in the teeth of Western resistance, by the Kemalists. These two countries led the pro-Western bloc at Bandung, while India tried to organize the "neutrals." There is a lesson here, if the policy-makers can grasp it.

In the end, mere force by itself decides nothing. Force will prove effective only if it serves to hasten the transition to a higher social level. The main job must be done by the Asians themselves; but not by all Asians. Political conflict is inevitable. The classes which benefited from the old regime will obstruct the emergence of the new order, and they will find allies in the West. The reformers themselves will be torn between undue timidity and frantic improvisation. Inadequate plans will be hurriedly jettisoned and replaced by over-ambitious programs leading to inflation and collapse. Communists will try to ride the wave of nationalist passion, turning the fight against the remnants of colonialism into an instrument of aggression against the democratic West. It is no use complaining because things are going to be rough for a while. People who want a quiet life have chosen the wrong century to be born in. At least there is hope that if the cold war is won, there may never again be a hot one.

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WERE THE SEPHARDIM HIDALGOS?

History Disputes Their Claim to Aristocracy

CECIL ROTH

"YOU must be a Sephardi," a silly woman once said to my wife. "It's so much more chic."

As a matter of fact, I far prefer the Sephardi ritual, and have attended Sephardi synagogues and services on four continents. (I haven't done so on the fifth partly because I've never been there, partly because no Sephardi synagogue exists on it.) I venture even to think that, with my work on the Marranos, on certain Italian communities, and on the Duke of Naxos, I have made rather more ample contributions to Sephardi history than the average historical scribbler. But every now and again I find my enthusiasm damped by the claims made (frequently by Ashkenazi "converts") on behalf of the Sephardim as the "aristocracy" of the Jewish people. The Rabbis said, I think, that all Jews are sons of princes. Anyway, they are all equally so, and these pretentious assertions appear to me objectionable. Further, they are historically unjustified.

What is a Sephardi? The prophet Obadiah (verse 20) foretold that at the time of the great restoration of the Jewish people "the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the South." Sepharad here refers probably to one of the maritime lands of the Eastern Mediterranean, at some distance from Palestine; an ancient tradition identified it not unreasonably with Apamea, in Asia Minor, sometimes written "Aspamia." It seems that, through a confusion between Aspamia and Ispania (i.e. Hispania) the identification was transferred to Spain in the early Middle Ages, when the mass of the Jewish people had begun to swing from East to West. Inevitably, Zarepath, which is mentioned in the same verse (but apparently as a place on the Palestinian border) became identified with the contiguous country, France. Other place names mentioned in the Bible were applied to various other areas of Europe: the only one that need interest us here is Ashkenaz—originally the name of a northern people descended from Japhet who were to take part in the destruction of Babylon (Genesis 10:3; Jeremiah 11:27), and now identified with Germany. In the Middle Ages, these names (and many others like them) were almost invariably applied to these countries in Jewish usage.

The Sephardim were therefore the Jews of Spain (or at the most of the Iberian Peninsula, including Portugal) and their descendants; to apply the term as is done today to Mediterranean and southern Jewry generally (in fact, to all Jews who are not Ashkenazim) is very wide of the mark.

SPANISH scholars fond of Biblical quotation (Moses Maimonides himself is a case in point) used to refer to themselves in all innocence as belonging to the "captivity of Jerusalem which is in Sepharad." Later on, this began to be interpreted strictly, and in some cases snobbishly and exclu-

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THE competitive rivalry between Ashkenazi and Sephardi, while more ancient than that between Litvak and Galitzianer, is of the same character: an attempt among Jews to establish an internal aristocracy. Is the centuries-old claim of the Sephardim to be somehow inherently superior to the Central and Eastern European Jew grounded in fact or myth? CECIL ROTH, the distinguished British historian, here traces the legend of Sephardi aristocracy through its various tributaries to some of the sources. Mr. Roth was born in London in 1899 and educated at Oxford. His reputation has been gained both in general and Jewish history; he is the author of a number of definitive histories of the Jews.

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sively: it was assumed that the Spanish Jews were descended from the elite of the Jewish people—the inhabitants (or even the nobles) of Jerusalem, deported to the Iberian Peninsula by Nebuchadnezzar on the destruction of the First Temple (and therefore, the community of Toledo is reported to have claimed, wholly innocent of all responsibility for the Crucifixion). The Jews of other lands were hence thought to be descended from an inferior stock.

Ironically, in historic fact, one could establish a far more impressive case for the reverse thesis, if one wished to make an artificial differentiation between one branch of the Jewish people and another. One cannot very easily trace with any degree of confidence the channels of migration whereby the Jews of the Eastern Mediterranean became transferred to Western Europe. But obviously to some extent this migration followed the same line as the transference of cultural traditions, which can be defined with some precision. The Palestinian tradition (as reflected in liturgy, hymnology, pronunciation of Hebrew, synagogal architecture, and many other aspects of cultural and religious life) was transferred, via the Byzantine Empire and Italy, over the Alps into France and then Germany and Poland, thus giving birth to the "Ashkenazi" tradition of today. The traditions followed in Spain, on the other hand, were influenced (whether through direct immigration, or through the exceptionally close cultural relations with Bagdad at the time of the Caliphate) by those of Mesopotamian (Babylonian) Jewry, which during the course of the ages had developed in its own, to some extent divergent, fashion. Thus, so far as can be ascertained, the Sephardi legend is diametrically contrary to the facts. It is the Ashkenazi Judaism rather than the Sephardi which preserves for good or ill the pure fountainhead of the Palestinian tradition, with all that it implies.

I DO not think that in the Middle Ages we find any important traces of a social differentiation between the Jews of Spain and those of Northern Europe. And if there was anything of the sort, it was here too, in part at least, in the opposite sense. The Jews of France, Germany, and England were basically what may politely be termed financiers and capitalists, living on interest payments; the artisan element was very small. In Spain, on the other hand, the minority of financiers and professional men at the head of the community was more than counterbalanced by a very large artisan element: metal workers, dyers, textile operatives, and so on. Northeast Spain, it is believed, was by far the most densely populated area of the Jewish world at this period, just as Poland was to be some centuries later. Moreover, the economic structure of Jewish life in Spain did not afford the same leisure for the study of the basic Talmudic literature as was the case north of the Pyrenees, where the Sephardim were therefore regarded as being intellectually retrograde.

Finally, it is a historic fact that in times of persecution the Jews of the Rhineland showed themselves more steadfast, to the point of death, than their southern coreligionists, who, whether in the face of Visigothic intolerance in the 7th century or Islamic in the 12th or Catholic in the 15th, tended in large numbers to compromise their consciences rather than to "sanctify the Name" by accepting martyrdom. We cannot tell how we would ourselves act in the same circumstances. But if, as Zunz said, "the duration of sorrows and the patience with which they are borne ennoble," the Ashkenazim took precedence over the Sephardim—and even in the days of their greatest degradation they were proud of this.

I AM here using the term "Ashkenazim" in its more general sense. At the close of the Middle Ages, the Jews had been driven out of France ("Zarepath"), hitherto the greatest center of Northern European Jewry, and the former Franco-Jewish traditions became centered in Germany ("Ashkenaz"). From Germany emigrants colonized the lands to the east, particularly Poland, and overwhelmingly influenced the culture of the

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"autochthonous" Jews whom they found there (who probably constituted in fact the vast majority of the amalgam that now took the primacy). Henceforth, the great mass of Jews, from the Rhine to the Vistula, followed in their prayers and liturgical practices the German or Ashkenazi rite, and became known loosely as Ashkenazim. (It would perhaps have been more logical to designate them, after the medieval name of France, as "Zarphatim.")

At a slightly later period, at the end of the 15th century, there took place the tragic expulsion from Spain and Portugal, which scattered the Jews of Spanish origin through the southern and eastern Mediterranean seaboards, where they implanted the Spanish, or Sephardi, tradition. But there was this difference: whereas a certain proportion of the Ashkenazim continued to live in those scattered districts of Germany where Jews were still tolerated, henceforth there were no Sephardim in Sepharad.

This delocalization, and geographical expansion, of Sephardi Jewry was accompanied by the beginning of what may be termed a process of annexation. We have seen that the German immigrants from Germany may have "Ashkenazized" (if one may use the term) the autochthonous elements whom they found in Poland. There can be no doubt about a parallel achievement on the part of the Sephardim. With their superior relative (if not absolute) numbers, and their superior culture, they exercised an overwhelming influence on the native Jews, and on other immigrant elements, in many of the lands where they found refuge—especially in the Balkans (in particular at Salonica) and the Turkish Empire generally. This influence was reinforced by the new discovery of printing. Formerly, there had been all manner of local traditions in matters liturgical, which were easily perpetuated. But with the spread of printed books, the "Sephardi" rite swept the board. "Sephardi" now began to be applied to the ritual followed rather than to national origin: it is curious to consider that "Askenazi" and "Sarfati" are now regarded as typically Sephardi names! This annexatory tendency has continued into modern times: it was only in the 19th century that (for example) the very ancient Persian Jewish rite of worship was finally submerged, and the Persians too became "Sephardim."

GEOGRAPHICAL expansion, however, was accompanied by a contraction in other respects. If one reads the history of the Jews in the Middle Ages, one finds that generally a good deal more space is devoted to Spanish than to Northern European Jewry, and this no doubt reflects the relative numerical importance of the two elements: the Sephardi and Oriental communities, combined, probably constituted a vast majority of the Jewish people. With the emergence of Polish Jewry in the 16th century a sort of balance was achieved. Thereafter, "Ashkenazi" Jewry raced ahead (either because of the integration of hitherto unrecorded masses, or as the result of an unexampled demographic expansion), until in the 19th and early 20th centuries it constituted probably some nine-tenths of the entire Jewish people. The balance was somewhat redressed in recent years, owing to the fact that the Germans were able to carry out their policy of annihilation more sweepingly in the Ashkenazi than in the Sephardi world. But the general picture is still unchanged; and in Western Europe and America, the Sephardim (in the wildly loose sense in which that term is now generally applied) enjoy something of the romantic prestige of a dwindling minority.

Of course, this is not universally true. There are some Sephardi elements who do not fit into this elegant pattern: the itinerant carpet dealers from the Levant, the poverty-stricken Syrians and Moroccans who set up their separate congregations in New York and elsewhere in the United States, the Spanish-speaking peddlers from Turkey and Greece who endeavored to squeeze out a living in Mexico and the Central American republics, some of the recent arrivals in certain African communities, even a considerable proportion of the newest wave of proletarian immigration into Israel.

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I DO not believe that any great social differentiation was discernible between Sephardim and non-Sephardim at the period of the expulsion from Spain. Hordes of penniless refugees are hardly likely to expect or to be accorded any special deference, in any case; and if the refugees sometimes objected to their hosts' uncouth Hebrew composition, the latter no less criticized their guests' retrograde Rabbinics. It is true that the Sephardim comprised amongst their number some persons of distinguished antecedents such as the Abrabanel family, and others who (like Joseph Nasi, Duke of Naxos) subsequently attained social distinction. But these were by no means the norm; and it must be remembered that the Jews of Poland and the neighboring lands had not yet become pauperized, as was to be the case later on, so that in this respect there was generally no sharp contrast. In the Mediterranean lands there was indeed a slower and perhaps more dignified tempo of life than in the north; but in those days this hardly came into consideration. Certainly there was no greater virtue in the teeming *mellahs* of Northern Africa than in the corresponding *Judengassen* of Germany; nor is there anything inherently more romantic in the preservation of medieval Spanish by the Jews of the Balkans than in the preservation of medieval German by the Jews of Lithuania. In the 16th century, the legend of Sephardi aristocracy had not yet been born.

The origin of this legend is to be traced to a new facet in Jewish life which began to emerge shortly after. When the professing Jews were expelled from Spain, there remained the large body of so-called Marranos—persons of Jewish origin or extraction who remained faithful in secret to their ancestral religious traditions though outwardly professing Christianity. In the course of the late 16th and 17th centuries, as is well known, Marrano refugees founded a chain of new Jewish communities in the various countries of the Atlantic seaboard, on both sides of the ocean, centering in the Old World in Amsterdam, London, and Hamburg. It was a highly selective emigration, for a very obvious reason. Spain and Portugal were remote, they were isolated from the rest of Europe by the wide expanse of France where no Jews were allowed, and the Inquisition was constantly on watch to forestall flight; so that the Marrano emigrants tended to be either men of wealth who had special facilities for the transference of money, or merchants who, having established themselves abroad, threw off by slow degrees the disguise of Christianity. These were followed sometimes by persons who could actually claim some degree of aristocracy in the technical sense: members of Marrano families which had intermarried with the Spanish and Portuguese aristocracy, or even risen to it. There were, to be sure, some poorer elements as well, but it was the others who set the tone (and provided the finances) for the newly founded communities. By reason of their antecedents, the Marrano elements were all provided with family names—still uncommon among northern Jewry—generally those of families which had stood their sponsors at baptism. Some of these names were indeed noble; in the Peninsula, the distinction between the original bearers of the names and their "New Christian" godchildren could be preserved easily enough, but abroad it tended to be obscured. Others were very ordinary names, like Mendes or Lopez, which, though they may sound to us more euphonious, are not inherently more distinguished than Schmidt or Meyer.

Once these Marrano pioneers had opened up new areas of settlement, German, and later, Polish Jews followed. Some of these, too, were affluent merchants, though since they had lived uninterruptedly loyal Jewish lives they tended at the outset to be less polished, or less "Europeanized," than the Spanish and Portuguese settlers; but the vast majority belonged to the lower classes, driven to emigrate by the Polish massacres and the pauperization of Eastern European Jewry. They had this advantage over the poorer elements among the Marranos—that they could reach their destinations overland by begging their way from community to

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community; so far as England was concerned, the short sea passage cost little, and could often be manipulated free of charge.

Thus by the side of the Spanish and Portuguese upper crust of the new communities (with a sprinkling of Ashkenazim), there grew up a vast proletariat of Germans and Poles (with a sprinkling of Sephardim) mainly dependent for their livelihood on peddling, petty trading, or less. It was now that the legend of the Sephardi "aristocracy" began to emerge. It could not be maintained in every particular. Many of the Sephardim too were petty hawkers, and the record of 18th-century Jewish criminality was by no means (as is generally imagined) an Ashkenazi monopoly. Anyone who has read the autobiography of the 18th-century Anglo-Jewish boxer Daniel Mendoza, which was recently republished, can hardly think of the Sephardim at that time as being an "aristocratic" or "hidalgo" element. On the other hand, there was not much to differentiate the upper crust of the Ashkenazim—the equivalents, relatives, and correspondents of the Court Jews of Germany, or the wealthy brokers, factors, and gem merchants—from their opposite numbers among the Sephardim. Francis Salvador, of North Carolina, may have resented the politics of David Franks, of New York, but he could hardly have looked down on him as a plebeian. Benjamin Levi, the virtual founder of the Ashkenazi community in London though one of the most lavish contributors to the construction of the new Sephardi synagogue built in 1701 (he was also one of the original Proprietors of New Jersey, and had very close American associations), actually warned his son in his will against marrying a member of the Sephardi group. This is the only formally expressed instance of this spirit of exclusion that I happen to have found, but it is in the reverse direction to what is usually believed.

NEVERTHELESS there was a considerable difference between the average economic (and therefore social) levels of the Ashkenazi and Sephardi sections of the newly established communities, the Ashkenazim being proportionately far more numerous among the poor. The disparity was heightened by the greater cohesion among the Sephardim, who, partly because of their smaller numbers and their close family connections, were able to organize themselves in a more exclusive spirit. They showed this originally, not as regards the Ashkenazim only, but against all who were not of their own "Spanish and Portuguese nation." In England, for example, not only the *tudescos* (Germans) but also the *berberiscos* (North Africans) and the *italianos* were long excluded from synagogal functions and honors.

But in due course this attitude became modified. This was partly because the newcomers in many cases tended to approximate in ritual and other matters—e.g., the pronunciation of Hebrew, a very important factor—to the Sephardi tradition; partly because their vernacular (Ladino or Italian) was not wholly alien (though this did not apply, of course, to those who normally spoke only Arabic); partly because the numbers involved were not overwhelming; and partly because such an influx, in moderation, was useful for reviving the sluggish circulation of the community and providing a synagogal proletariat, which in certain circumstances had its advantages. Hence the gates of the Spanish and Portuguese synagogues were opened a little more widely, especially in England, which was at this time a significant center of immigration. Thus it happened (to take only one example) that the Italian family of Montefiore, deriving from the neighborhood of Ancona and originally following the Roman (i.e. Italo-German rather than Spanish) synagogal tradition, was not merely accepted into the London Sephardi community, but came later on to symbolize in a special sense its aristocratic and patrician quality. Those branches of the family left behind in Italy, on the other hand, remained undistinguished. In the American colonies, owing to the relative sparseness of the original Spanish and Portuguese element and the fact that the later arrivals were not sufficient in number to

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establish a separate organization, this assimilatory tendency went still further, the Ashkenazim too being absorbed into the Sephardi community. Dr. David de Sola Pool in his recent book, *Portraits Etched in Stone,* has shown that the Ashkenazim formed the numerically preponderant element even in the first part of the 18th century; and a majority of the handful of old families which still devotedly rally round the Shearith Israel synagogue in New York, founded just three hundred years ago, bear names which unequivocally exclude Spanish and Portuguese ancestry in the male line.

As I have suggested, a few Spanish and Portuguese Jewish families could reasonably claim some degree of actual nobility, in the technical sense: for example, the family of the Barons de Belmonte, or that of Lopez Suasso, Barons of Avernas le Gras. But it might as well be pointed out that these did not stand alone, and were indeed anticipated some generations earlier elsewhere in the Jewish world. The first Jew to be formally ennobled in Christian Europe is said to be the Ashkenazi Jacob Basevi, of Prague, who was made Freiherr of Treuenberg by the Emperor Ferdinand II in 1622. The Italian Jacob da Fano was created Marquis of Villimpenta about the same time. These titles of nobility were as early, and certainly as authentic, as those of any of the Marrano "hidalgos" settled in Amsterdam.

But the legend went on, gaining strength as the successors of the more enterprising Marrano merchants of the earlier generation began to live on their investments and thus to qualify for the title of "gentleman." To some extent the legend may have been fostered by a kind of "inferiority complex" among the Sephardim—a realization that their economic hegemony had passed, and an attempt to seek moral compensation in another direction; a determination to maintain internal solidarity, for fear of being utterly overwhelmed. This was the period when in many Sephardi synagogues Ashkenazim were not permitted to intermingle with the general body of the worshippers; when the Sephardi who married an Ashkenazi was disowned by the synagogue and almost put under the ban; when the Bordeaux Jews invoked the assistance of the government to prevent an Ashkenazi influx; when the cultured Isaac de Pinto replied to the venomous attacks of Voltaire by admitting more or less the justice of his strictures as regards the *tudescos,* while maintaining that he himself and his like, the Portuguese Jews, belonged to a wholly different and unquestionably superior element. It is told how a London Sephardi of this period used to have his chairs dusted after an Ashkenazi had sat down in them; but I think that this must have been either an unhappy witticism, or a natural reaction to the lower orders of any synagogal, or ecclesiastical, rite. Zangwill's delightful pastiche, *The King of the Schnorrers,* traps something of the ridiculous spirit that sometimes prevailed, but I think it is quite wrong in one respect: in the 18th century, the spirit of snobbery which Zangwill describes had affected as yet only the upper class of the community; it was only in the 19th century that the legend of the Sephardi Hidalgo really became established. Its spread was to some extent the achievement of the writings of that arch-romantic, Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, who, in order to establish for himself an origin which would qualify him to act as a leader among the British aristocracy, managed to persuade himself of the truth of the legend that he did so much to propagate. But as a matter of fact he utterly deceived himself, even as regards the details: he had among his ultimate ancestry only a small infusion of the Marrano or "Visigothic" blood on which he prided himself; of his four grandparents, two were of Italian and one of Levantine extraction.

The outside world, to be sure, did not always share the more flattering outlook. Precisely those same failings which the Sephardim sometimes imputed to the Ashkenazim were imputed to them by their Gentile neighbors at the time of their first arrival: that they were alien in appearance,

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uncouth in manner, questionable in method, unsanitary in their manner of life. When the Marranos first arrived in Venice, at the end of the 15th century, they were accused of overcrowding in just the same way as were the German and Polish Jews when they reached Western Europe many generations later—and no doubt with good reason, for refugees inevitably tend to overcrowd. The polemical pamphlets directed against the Spanish and Portuguese immigrants in England in the 17th and early 18th centuries anticipate very closely the general lines of the accusations made against the Ashkenazi arrivals later on—with the additional embellishment, obviously unjustified in the case of the Ashkenazim, that persons who had dissembled their faith were not deserving of overmuch sympathy.

Social differentiation expressed itself inevitably in synagogal organization and practice. The wealthier class among the Sephardim, used to the ways and values of the outside world, tried to introduce similar aesthetic standards into the synagogue; brought up as Catholics, they introduced to Jewish worship some of the formality of the Church; in Holland, maybe, they developed a certain slow and deliberate method of enunciation which henceforth characterized the communities of the Atlantic seaboard, in contrast to spontaneous ullulations which still prevailed in the Mediterranean. Hence the method of rendering the services of the Spanish and Portuguese communities—choral singing, a slow dignity on the part of the reader, a certain pompousness in ceremonial—accentuated the actual liturgical differences, which, except on certain occasions of the year, were not so great. There was a striking contrast between this and the fiery devotion, the over-vocal piety, the indecorous agitations, which characterized and in some eyes marred the neighboring Ashkenazi places of worship. As for the liturgy itself, it lacked the excrescences and distractions with which the Palestinian (and after them the Franco-German) hymnologists had obscured the more simple pristine forms, their place being taken by measured compositions of the Spanish school of poets—far more elegant, but far less moving.

The same is the case with the pronunciation of Hebrew. The general impression, that the Sephardi pronunciation is the more faithful, is apparently erroneous. It is the Ashkenazi that so far as one can tell is nearer to the ancient Palestinian pronunciation (witness many ancient transcriptions, and the rendering of the vowels according to the Yemenite tradition), the Sephardim following the Babylonian usage in this too. The choice of a simplified, modernized form of the Sephardi system for the modern revival of Hebrew was partly an accident, partly a mistake. This cannot indeed obscure the fact that it is more euphonious, that it has been adopted, that it has prevailed, and that in all likelihood it will in future come into universal usage, but all this does not make it retrospectively more authentic.

In the course of the past hundred years, there took place a vast expansion of Ashkenazi Jewry, largely due to the violent eruption westwards of the then illimitable reservoir of Jewish population in Central and Eastern Europe. In consequence, the old-established Sephardi communities were almost entirely overwhelmed. The primacy in the Jewish world was seized, almost rudely, by the Ashkenazim, and the Sephardi element was not only overtaken, but was to a great extent neglected—a fault for which tardy amends are now being made. Hurt, bewildered, the Sephardim—especially those of Western Europe and America—fell back on their residuary title to distinction—not their future hope, but their past record; not their achievement, but their ancestry. The Ashkenazi romantics now adopted and uncritically swallowed the Sephardi Legend: the Sephardim do not count for much in the Jewish world today, perhaps, but they constituted the aristocracy of the Jewish people, marked off from the rest of their coreligionists by their hereditary Spanish *grandeza*, their stately manners, and their "hidalgo" traditions.

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OUR "REVOLUTION" IN INCOME DISTRIBUTION

An Appraisal

ROBERT LEKACHMAN

IT IS the enthusiastic custom of economists to label as revolutionary and permanent any important change in our mode of economic organization which endures for as long as five years. In the 20's, after the First World War, it was the vainglorious boast of American economists that permanent prosperity had been achieved. When the horrifying events of 1929 ended this dream (the story is told with wit and urbanity by J. K. Galbraith in his recent book *The Great Crash*), they adeptly substituted the notion of permanent depression and proved that forevermore American capitalism would face diminished incentives to investment, and could expect therefore only unemployed men and machines, and static or declining living standards. This theory of economic maturity no sooner achieved sophisticated form than the Second World War and the inflation following it persuaded numerous observers, among them the astute London *Economist*, that the Age of Inflation was upon us, that we could anticipate steadily rising prices, wages, and incomes without limit. For the last two years American prices have perversely remained firm or even sagged. So it has gone. We have had managerial revolutions, organizational revolutions, and in the earlier writings of Galbraith a new concept of power relationships, the now fashionable cliché of countervailing power.

The latest of these revolutions to be proclaimed is in the field of income distribution, and the evidence for it is founded upon a much solider basis of statistical investigation than usual. Briefly, this view claims that in the last fifteen years income in the United States has been more and more broadly distributed, and that this trend promises to continue into the future. However, if we evaluate the accuracy of the claims made and examine their implications, we shall find that the story is not so simple, though real changes in income distribution have indeed occurred and their results are substantial. We shall find that these gains are possibly transitory, and the revision of perspectives they suggest not altogether warranted.

A VAGUE discomfort overcomes many Americans at the spectacle of great or at least obvious differences in income, a discomfort probably associated with our deep-seated assumption that one man is (or should be) as good as another, and that luck or greed rather than ability decides the distribution of economic rewards. This discomfort must have diminished in the face of recent evidence of income redistribution. A comparison may illuminate the change. In the interwar period, 1919-38, the top one per cent of income recipients collected on the average 15 per cent of the total national income, and the upper 5 per cent got 30 per cent of all income. By 1948, the upper one per cent were receiving only 8.5 per cent and the top 5 per cent only 18 per cent of all income. In ten years we had moved half the way to income

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HAVE we achieved an "economic revolution" in income distribution in the United States? Many of our foremost economists believe we have. But there are dissenting voices, pointing out that for all the tremendous gains already made, we have a good way to go before we can declare this economic revolution complete and secure. One cautionary note is here sounded by ROBERT LEKACHMAN, an associate professor in the economics department of Barnard College. Mr. Lekachman was born in 1920, and educated at Columbia University. His last appearance in these pages was in our September 1954 number, with "Economics: Science or Visionary Art?"

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equality. Moreover, these last figures represented a diminishing share of an increasing pie. Economic expansion had enabled lower-income groups to improve their lot absolutely as well as relatively, and softened the shock of relative loss by the upper classes with the consolation of undiminished real income. This shift is all the more astounding when we note how stable the proportions of the total income received by the various income groups were between 1919-38 and how little affected by business cycles or other major events. There is certainly no parallel in our economic history, or indeed in the economic history of any other land, for a change on the scale experienced since 1938 in so short a time.

How can we explain the statistical facts? Of the reasons for our drift toward greater income equality, the most obvious is the decline in unemployment from something like 9.5 million in 1939 to 0.7 million in 1944. Or to put the matter more affirmatively, one cause of declining inequality has been rapid economic growth. Since the upper-income brackets earn by far the lion's share of income from property and the rest of us depend much more largely on wages and salaries—the "employee compensation" of the statistics—anything which increases employment increases, other things being equal, both the share of employee compensation in total income payments and the share of the lower 95 per cent of the receivers of income. And with the decline in unemployment, greatly increased overtime became available, which further increased the shares of the gainfully employed.

A principal consequence, then, of the decline in unemployment has been to decrease the share of income derived from the ownership of land, securities, and other assets, and to increase the proportion of income derived from work or personal services. Today the fact that property owners can still buy advantages for their children and themselves in the form of better education, wider social connections, and great opportunities in jobs and professions—in the arts and graces of life—does not seem to imply necessarily, as it did before, the consolidation of inequality or its increase in the future. There can be a happy cycle of more education, more opportunities, more education, and more income for more people, as well as a vicious cycle of low income, scant education, and still lower income for more people.

Like the unemployed, farmers before 1939 had lagged behind the income procession. But after 1939, farm income increased a good deal more rapidly than did other forms of income. Although farmers even now earn less on the average than does the non-agricultural sector of the population, the difference has diminished.

Even within groups, there has been a noticeable tendency for the lower paid to advance more rapidly than the higher paid. Wages were higher in the past in finance, transportation, and communication than in manufacturing. But between 1939 and 1948 wages rose more rapidly in manufacturing than they did in the other three fields. At the same time the importance of the low-paid services trades has shrunk. A case in point has been the decline of domestic service, a traditionally ill-paid and ill-regarded occupation. Furthermore, the wage policies pursued by trade unions have tended to diminish the differentials between skilled and unskilled labor. The practice of the big CIO unions in particular has been to press for flat-amount increases (ten cents, twenty-five cents, etc.) rather than for percentage increases. As simple arithmetic demonstrates, a succession of these flat-rate increases for everyone has the effect of diminishing the percentage differentials that separate the various groups. Finally, the relatively harsher impact of the progressive income tax on the upper-income groups has also operated to narrow income differentials. In fact, wherever we look we find that the humble have improved their income status and, miracle of miracles, no one is the worse off, since there is so much more for all.

Moreover, some portion of the income inequality which still persists is wholesome. As is sometimes overlooked in discussions of income distribution, income increases with age

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right up to the few years which precede retirement. Here is a built-in element of inequality that, upon reflection, few individuals would care to eliminate. For should not a man as he grows older reap the fruits of increasing professional capacity, should he not expect a better standard of living to accompany broadening tastes and growing family responsibilities? In fact, our society would be guilty of injustice if it rewarded equally the interne fresh from medical school and the mature specialist of fifty, the law clerk and the veteran trial lawyer, or the new college instructor and his distinguished seniors.

All of these changes have taken place in an expanding economy accompanied, as one would expect, by rising birth rates, new construction, and increasing economic totals of all varieties. It is not too much to say that without a leveling up of income distribution these could not have eventuated as rapidly as they have, and very possibly not at all.

So much for the facts of our income revolution. What do these statistics imply about the quality of American life, the range of opportunities now available to Americans, the standard of living within the grasp of most citizens?

There is no doubt, first of all, that the good things made possible by American technology—automobiles and refrigerators, Paris copies and homburgs, Grand Rapids furniture and inexpensive reproductions of great art—are more widely distributed than ever before and little doubt that this is a happy change. Of course, substantial quantities of these goods are bought on some kind of credit. But consumer credit is itself an invention worthy of democracy, combining as it does faith in the average man's honesty and confidence in his earning powers.

It is true that not all automobiles are Cadillacs, and reproductions are not originals. But it is also true that Chevrolets look a good deal more like this year's Cadillac than like the Chevrolet of ten years past. It is probably accurate to add that, in general, the clothes, durable consumer goods, and even the houses designed for most of us, look surprisingly like the more expensive originals from which they are copied. Moreover, to a degree success feeds upon itself: as the market widens, unit costs decline and external economies become available to more enterprises; thus the celebrated advantages of mass production achieve wider scope. There is simply no question but that for more and more Americans the world is full of desirable material objects that fall increasingly within their grasp.

We needn't deprecate the advantages of possessing physical objects. All the world, including the supposedly ascetic Orient, envies the combination of luck and cunning joined in the American achievement of material plenty. But something more important than mere command of commodities flows from the greater equality of incomes we have been describing. More Americans than ever before have learned discretion in the spending of their incomes. No longer is life a daily struggle between inflexible income and frustrated demands for the bare physical elements of subsistence. Much of what Americans now buy ministers to their comfort and even their luxury, rather than merely satisfying their minimal needs. The durable consumer goods that are the indices of our living standards have long lives. The dates of their purchase are therefore optional. As Americans learned somewhat to their surprise during the Second World War, automobiles can run as long as fifteen years, and old refrigerators and vacuum cleaners can be made by judicious repair to yield faithful service indefinitely.

The consumer chooses not only among various occasions for purchase but also among many possible items and, though a great deal of advertising touts spurious differences among goods, genuine variety does exist and the keen competition of many sellers for a rich harvest of dollars has made product differentiation profitable for many manufacturers and sellers. If true freedom involves real choice, then in the economic sphere Americans possess more freedom than

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ever before: to buy goods, to postpone purchases, to alter their decisions, even not to spend their money. Businessmen ever alert to changing markets have noted these facts. Advertisers make special appeals to Negroes, which is a sign of the increasing prosperity of this traditionally oppressed group, since a group not free to choose is not economically worth the expense of appealing to. Such is the arithmetic of business enterprise. Publishers of "true confession" magazines have appealed to national advertisers to note that their readers—mostly wives of wage-earners—now represent a market with great spending power and, the inevitable concomitant, considerable discretion in its use. The true democracy of commerce is spending ability. By this criterion, democracy is advancing rapidly.

But has the American consumer done anything more with his new-found discretion than to tread a cautious path among rival television sets and competing refrigerators? Fortunately, the evidence is overwhelming that much better use is being made of the new economic freedoms than heretofore.

Millions of Americans have altered their lives in a most fundamental manner: they have left the city and moved to the suburbs, and in so doing have made many changes in the social landscape—some of them already well described in the pages of this magazine. Above all, this movement has been coupled with home-ownership. For the first time in the 20th century more Americans own their own homes than live in rented premises—even if they share their ownership with the bank that grants the mortgage. Most of the new homes are small, many of them have been hastily erected and remain depressing in their similarity to the dozens which surround them: nonetheless, numerous citizens can open their own doors and enter their own homes.

The new suburbia has fostered no intellectual renaissance. It is certainly too soon and the evidence is too slight to conclude that the new leisure has quickened the intellectual hunger, improved the taste, or deepened the values of any substantial number. The highest of the new values seems to be job security, income, and social status and acceptance. But the move to the suburbs is recent; in the past, cultural efflorescence has always depended upon, if it has not paralleled, a material margin above bare existence. Our margin is greater in amount and wider in distribution, and therefore suggests at least the possibility of cultural advance, of improvement in the quality of life as well as in its sheerly material comfort.

THE picture so far painted is on balance a cheerful one. More people have more things in our land than ever before. But it is not altogether as simple as that.

There are technical considerations that lessen the conclusiveness of the income redistribution statistics. National income definitions exclude from the statistical totals two kinds of real income which, when taken into consideration, swell the share of upper-income groups: expense accounts and capital gains. There is no question but that expense-account allowances are an important element in the income of the better paid, or at least that they exceed the purposes for which they are ostensibly granted. The expense account forms in effect a kind of uncounted and untaxed income. Because national income endeavors to isolate the return from productive labor from other forms of dollar income, capital gains are also excluded from the total. No increased quantity of products corresponds to a capital gain, and increased product is the computer's test of productive activity. Although the average man may on occasion sell a house or some securities at a price higher than what he paid and thus realize a capital gain, it is the top one and 5 per cent of the income recipients who benefit most from this kind of gain, and there is every incentive from the tax system, which bears much more lightly on income from capital gains than it does on income from work, to convert as much income as possible into capital gains by whatever legal device appears legitimate. In general, it remains true that the larger the income the greater the possibility of per-

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fectly legal tax avoidance. At any rate, the profits garnered from stock market speculation and real estate transfers escape the net of the national income analyst.

Somewhat more ambiguous is the case of undistributed corporate profits, which are not included at the present time in these income comparisons. If these sums were taken into account, they would be found to go mostly to those already receiving the larger incomes. Since the amounts involved are considerable, such an accounting would show a substantially greater inequality of income distribution.

Finally, most national income measurements tend to overestimate the trend towards greater equality because of the shift of much home production to the factory and the market: when the housewife does her own baking and laundry, the value of her product goes unmeasured, but when commercial bakeries and laundries, not to mention supermarkets and restaurants, assume her functions, the apparent value of output rises, for each of these commercial services has a price tag attached to it and the national-income computer, in summing these price tags, registers an increase in output which has not actually occurred. There is no doubt that more and more of food-processing, to cite just one item, has been transferred from home to factory. The housewife need not even cook her sausages; she can buy them in a form which requires only warming and browning. Her meat is cut and packaged for her, her vegetables cleaned and canned or frozen, her soups prepared in "homelike" factories. Our figures, in other words, overstate the improvement in our standard of life as measured by the quantity of material goods, although they may understate it if we try to set a value on leisure as an unmeasured product whose quantity has grown by virtue of this increased division of labor.

These technical qualifications as to income redistribution add up to an unknown total; but they are qualifications only, affecting the magnitude and not the direction of the shift toward greater income equality. What is much more troubling for a democratic society is some of the ways in which we still deprive groups of people of equal access to the fruits of our increased productivity and total wealth.

Although we may recognize at the outset that a world in which economic equality were to be complete (dodging the difficulties of definition here involved) would be a world insufferably dull and perhaps inconsistent with natural human cravings for individuality, it remains true that the only inequalities that a democratic society can with self-respect recognize are at least roughly correlated with inequalities of ability and energy. But it is a self-evident fact that we do not grant all of our citizens equal access to markets on this basis. It is nowhere possible for a Negro to acquire land or housing on the same terms and in the same places as a white person. Because this is true, rents paid by Negroes are much higher, their living conditions much worse, and their real income, therefore, much lower than those of white persons of similar ability and apparent money income. The Negro slums of New York, Chicago, and other Northern cities are a grim reminder of what the absence of equal access to markets entails. We accentuate the inequalities which already exist between the incomes of whites and Negroes.

Then we compound this injustice by our refusal to allow Negroes and some other groups, too, equal chances either for education or employment. Negroes, Jews, and Italians can become doctors much less readily than can Anglo-Saxons, and this barrier is made higher by the tendency of medical and other schools to grant preference to relatives of their alumni. If they succeed in attaining an education in the face of these odds, Negroes in particular find only narrow scope for the employment of their skills, and Jews and other minorities encounter barriers in the way of their attainment of those managerial positions in the great corporations which more and more represent opportunity in the business world. The inevitable frustration they feel is an unattractive comment on our "use" of human beings.

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There is much justice in the common view that we have done a great deal in recent years to lower these barricades. Segregation has suffered possibly fatal blows, restrictive covenants have been shattered, anti-discrimination legislation has been passed. The trend is favorable: it is no longer fair, if it ever was, to label the entire South an unprogressive, reactionary area; and Northern attitudes have also improved. What is still true, however, is that *these gains are extremely precarious, for they have occurred very largely during a period of economic advance almost unprecedented in our history.*

We are thus brought to our central reservation about the meaning of recent decreases in income inequality—their possible impermanence. All of these mitigations of income inequality have accompanied high prosperity and rapid economic growth, and prosperity has promoted as well as paralleled economic equality. Prosperity means more employment and weakened employer resistance to wage demands and shorter working hours, at the same time that it increases overtime opportunities. During the recent economic recession, more workers lost income because of the disappearance of overtime or even full time, than actually lost jobs. In a year like 1954 we would have done well to maintain gains in income equality already registered. It is much more likely that we went backward. But as our overwhelmingly Republican press emphasized long past the point of boredom, this was only a mild recession, harmful to few. What will a real departure from full employment mean? How many workers will lose their jobs? How many more will see their incomes diminish?

Still more precarious is the position of the farmer. His income mounted during and after the war partly because food needs increased to a new point, partly because a complex apparatus of government supports maintained prices, and partly because high levels of consumer income within the United States promoted consumption of increasing quantities of meat, vegetables, and dairy products. In the last few years each one of these props to farm prosperity has been weakened. Other nations have increased their agricultural production at the same time as marketing difficulties have impeded the free flow of food from the United States to the remaining deficit areas. Economic recession within the United States, however mild, has slowed the rise in the quality of diet. The farm policy of the Eisenhower administration, whatever can be said in its favor on general economic grounds, has supported farm income less strongly and has probably penalized the less prosperous farmers most.* All of this has happened, let it be emphasized, during a period when demand by most criteria has been very high and when unsettled world conditions and large military establishments have alike promoted farm production. No very difficult feat of inference is needed to picture the drop in farm income which less favorable combinations of circumstances might cause.

A special feature of the recent recession operated to increase the proportion of income derived from property and to diminish that derived from work: the repeal of the excess-profits tax. It is this legislative act which explains the elementary paradox that greeted the reader of corporate reports when time after time he encountered the headline "Net Profits Up, Sales Down." National income declines reflected themselves in loss of sales and labor income. Profits remained high and the distribution of income moved away from that degree of equality already achieved, since property income still remains highly concentrated among the top percentiles of the population. This effect was reinforced by stiffening employer resistance to higher wages and to the fringe demands which recent labor negotiations have featured.

So far, in a sense, we have been examining no more than the surface of the problem. During these years of economic good fortune, numerous Americans have

*Like most other economists, I support out of economic principle Secretary Benson's efforts to make the farm market more free. Like some other economists, I think he timed his program badly.

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given hostages to continued fair weather. They have embodied their income increases in durable consumer goods. More than this, with the willing aid of banks, automobile dealers, finance agencies, department stores, and small loan companies, they have pledged future income and, in many instances, increases in future income against immediate possession of automobiles, refrigerators, television sets, and, above all, houses. No major depression is required to cause trouble for the optimists who have been encouraged to buy beyond their means by all the lures and wiles at the disposal of modern American merchandising. The new suburbs covering yesterday's potato fields are communities of debtors whose titles to their possessions are conditional and contingent upon increased earnings.* Like Alice, they must run just as fast as they can in order to stay just where they are, and faster still if they are to improve their lot. We can only guess at the tensions and anxieties generated by this relentless pursuit of the emblems of success in our society, and shudder at what they might give rise to during an economic setback. At any rate, the ownership of these new assets is even more precarious than recent increases in income and recent changes in its distribution. Although waves of repossession have yet to lap over the heads of these struggling home- and automobile-owners, no inherent law of American good fortune guarantees us against the major depression that could bring this about.

THE scale upon which our corporate economy is constructed further complicates the prospects of the home-owner and further contributes to his instability. The centers of decision in our economy have steadily shrunk in number as the size of the corporate giant has steadily increased in response to the growing advantages—technical, financial, advertising, research, sales—of hugeness. General Motors, General Electric, Swift, Armour, Ford, United States Steel, and their peers each numbers its employees in the tens, if not hundreds, of thousands. Scores of their plants cover the country. Corporate decision may with complete propriety close or shift a given plant and, as a matter of routine, transfer employees from one place to another. What of the worker or junior managerial employee who has sunk his roots in the community where he works? Granted that property ownership carries with it spiritual rewards, can the same be said of peripatetic property ownership? An engineering friend once suggested that large companies should have homes and families on tap all over the country so that when an employee was transferred the laborious task of shifting his family and possessions could be avoided. He would simply move into a new home in a new city, filled with standardized furniture, and a customized, company-approved wife and children. His former family would wait with equanimity for their equally mass-produced new head to come from his city of prior employment. It has not yet come to that in American industry, but increasing numbers of Americans, many of them quite low in the income scale, lead the lives of nomads. It is fortunate that their camels have carburetors.

Sometimes the unit affected is as large as a whole community. When General Motors and Ford lock in deadly embrace over the division of the automobile market, not the least of the casualties is the town of South Bend, Indiana, where the Studebaker works are located. The effect of the corporate decision is widespread and often decisive to the economic health of both communities and individuals. The responsibility of heads of corporate entities is to their stockholders; they owe no allegiance to the wider public—any consideration they extend to it is an act of grace, not a matter of right. Corporations may act in the public good but, again, they may not. It is a long time since economists as a group believed that the calculus of private profit infallibly converged with the

*Many home-owners who are veterans have made no cash down payment at all on their houses. Some veterans and non-veterans, too, have had their closing fees included in their mortgage. In the latter instance perhaps two years must elapse before the "owner" acquires *any* equity in "his" house.

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public interest. The increased power of the corporate manager is no matter of individual malevolence or benevolence. The scope of managerial decision has inevitably broadened as the size of business unit has increased.

IN POINTING to the essential instability of the movement toward income equality, have we overstated the case? After all, have we not since the dark days of the early 1930's so improved the institutional arrangements which guard prosperity that a major depression need never again occur? Have not our corporations learned to reckon with the power of trade unions, other corporate giants, and government? Does not the sum of these changes imply that the powerful trend toward increasing equality of income fostered by prosperity and economic growth will never be more than temporarily reversed?

In answering these questions, unqualified pessimism is as mistaken as unqualified optimism. The list of groups protected against economic adversity is long and the measures designed to prevent a severe depression are numerous. Manual workers enjoy the benefits of Fair Labor Standards legislation that is occasionally strengthened, as in New York, by state laws. Their unions, aided by the Wagner Act, have been hampered only moderately by the Taft-Hartley Act. A network of social measures, federal and state, regulates workmen's compensation and conditions of employment. An impressive collection of union welfare funds and company pension programs guards the worker against indigence in old age. Directly or indirectly, these features of the economic landscape are brakes against drops in income. They are supported by agricultural legislation which still protects most farmers. Pressure to increase the scope and amount of such legislation would rise during a depression and probably have effect. Credit avenues open to farmers are wider and more numerous, and terms much less onerous, than ever before.

Nor is this all. An armory of powerful fiscal weapons can and probably will be employed even by a conservative administration. Government deficits are produced automatically under adverse economic circumstances by the action of the progressive income tax, which is very sensitive to even moderate dips in income payments to individuals and corporations, the amount of the deficit representing a net addition to spending potential. The Federal Reserve System can enlarge the supply of currency and credit available to the business community by its traditional weapons of open-market purchases of government securities, and variations in rediscount rates and reserve requirements. Tax reductions can encourage consumer and business spending. A final resort to public works is always possible. The huge program of highway construction proposed by President Eisenhower is an illustration of one kind of program. Our schools could usefully absorb enormous sums of money in plant expansion and replacement. By these and other techniques, an alert administration can protect groups most directly threatened, and act more widely against general economic reversal. Perhaps as important as any one of these measures, or even all of them combined, is the general public confidence that never again will a federal government stand by passively and watch its constituents suffer.

We cannot doubt, therefore, that we are better off now than we used to be because these safeguards have been built into our economic system. But one overwhelming fact argues against complacency: *not one of these measures has yet been tested in action by a severe economic reversal.* Recent economic history tells the story. All of these measures date from the first two administrations of Franklin Roosevelt. Now the plain fact is that recovery from the doldrums of the 1930's was incomplete right up to the beginning of the Second World War, despite spending on public works, financial encouragement, inflationary policies, and protective farm and labor enactments. Since 1939, war, postwar boom, another war, and preparations for a third have dominated the economic

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scene. Without denying that population growth and technological advance have also been powerful factors, the conclusion is inescapable that we do not know how successfully we could combat the threat of a major depression.

Neither have we logically disproved the gloomy hypothesis of "secular stagnation"—the fashionable notion of the 1930's that the forces of expansion have been diminishing since the First World War and that chronic deficiencies in demand and employment are to be anticipated. It is still possible, as the "secular stagnationists" maintained, that 1914 was some sort of dividing line between the America in which free enterprise moved from triumph to triumph and an America in which free enterprise requires more governmental supplement and continuous public intervention than most Americans favor.

Under the circumstances, elementary caution compels us to view prosperity itself as a precarious achievement and the gains derived from it as uncertain. The whole record of economic advance is a warning, for it is a tale of continued instability in every industrialized land. Paradoxically, the very success of our economy has tended to increase the danger of instability. For the mark of the rich economy is its ability to postpone expenditure. Consumers can wait for their durable goods. Businessmen can postpone projected expenditures on equipment, and delay the construction of new factories, should they take alarm at the immediate economic prospect. We can wait because we are rich. The problem of poor countries is starvation. The problem of rich countries is the business cycle.

We must guard against the fashionable error of assuming that the economic future will resemble the economic present. Especially, must we be cautious in predicting a continuance of the economic growth which has had so much to do with our gains in equity. It is a sobering fact to a social scientist that the record of economic prediction is extraordinarily poor, so poor indeed as to suggest that we understand very little of the intricate social and economic processes which shape our lives. We know much less about the causes of prosperity than the optimists among us think, and still less about how to control economic fluctuations. Therefore we must be wary of regarding the so-called revolution in income distribution as anything more than a temporary improvement that can become permanent only at the price of vigorous private action and imaginative public policy.

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"THE FIFTH BOOK OF THE MACCABEES"

A Narrative

CHARLES REZNIKOFF

I

GAZA of the Philistines was still a great city: the Arabs of the wilderness traded there for pottery and knives; and caravans from Egypt stopped in Gaza because of its many wells of fresh water and the gardens on every side. But its inhabitants were no longer a warlike people. Even the speech they once spoke had long been forgotten; Nehemiah, three hundred years before, heard the last of it in Ashdod.

The army of Judea pitched their tents on the sand dunes between Gaza and the sea and in the groves of olive trees—under a sky alive with kites and vultures. Above the camp bristling with spears was the blue standard: a lion rampant embroidered upon it and the motto of the Hasmoneans, "Who is like You among the mighty, Lord?"

Then the soldiers of the king of Judea walked the narrow streets and entered the temples of the new gods of Gaza which were the gods of the Greeks and had failed it. And the Jews spoke of Samson who, blinded, did grind in its prison; of how the Israelites had once hidden in caves and holes from the Philistines; and the Jews praised the Lord of Hosts, blessed be His name!

The king of Judea put to death the chief men of the city in their temple of Apollo and razed Gaza—wall and towers, temples and dwellings—he razed it to the ground, and came back to Jerusalem: through crowds waving palm branches and greeting him with the clash of cymbals and shouts of praise.

CHARLES REZNIKOFF, in a mood to add to the Apocryphal Four Books of the Maccabees, here presents us with his own "fifth book." He bases his prose-poem narrative on accounts given by Josephus, in his *The Jewish War* and *Antiquities of the Jews*. Mr. Reznikoff appeared just this past month in our pages, with a "Group of Verse."

But at the feast in the court of the king's palace, amidst the huzzas, the soldiers heard a sharp dissenting voice—an old man berating the king: "Enough for you, Alexander Jannai, the crown of David, and leave the miter of the high priest! Even if you had the right to wear it, it is not to be worn at a feast like this and by one whose hands have shed much blood!"

The king sat grinding his teeth while men and officers shouted. The captains of the mercenaries—not Jewish at all and eager to show devotion—had hands on hilts, when the king in a loud voice cried: "Peace!" At the word slaves rushed into the courtyard and some began handing about cakes of fresh bread in baskets while others poured the red wine into cups. Still others brought leather bottles of wine and left them on the tables, and many a cruse of oil for the salted herbs, and lumps of figs and dates.

Along the wall of the courtyard
the pomegranate trees were in blossom;
doves murmured in the branches
and, on the barren ground,
dust swirled about the blue wings.
The dancing girls began the dances
of Alexandria and Antioch,
moving hands and fingers, shoulders and
body,
but feet hardly at all;
watching them, the soldiers were soon joking
and breaking out into song.

Bearded men in the hall of the palace:
gaping at the good flooring
of heavy cedar boards; at the walls—
four rows of white stone,
the top carved into trees and plants
so skillfully
branches and leaves seemed to move.
"Judea is grain, Galilee straw,
and all beyond—chaff!"

Narrow square forehead, a long curved nose

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thick at the nostrils,
thick lips but a well-formed mouth, a strong jaw,
a long black beard, heavy black eyebrows
and keen—but narrow—black eyes:
the king of Judea came in,
a goblet of red wine in his hand,
walking unsteadily
in shoes of soft red leather.

In the courtyard they were singing
the Song of Deborah:
The river Kishon swept them away,
the ancient river, the river Kishon.
O my soul,
you have trodden down strength!

II

WALKING in the gardens of the king, "Do you really suppose," one of the women of the court said mockingly, "that God gave the Law to Moses in the clouds and smoke of a mountain? That the Books of Moses, dreary with genealogies and laws, may be likened for knowledge to Aristotle, for wisdom and beauty of speech to Plato?"

Her nose was small and straight and her eyes blue,
her lips full and her chin round;
a Jewess and yet with her red hair and blue eyes
a very daughter of the Amorites.
The red hair, glinting with gold dust,
was bound in a snood
over which the hair tumbled
in ringlets;
and little golden bells were about her ankles.

She wore a necklace of the coins of Judea, showing spokes of a wheel and a galley at sea: curious symbols for a nation in the hills. But apt enough for the ambition of its king—or for a scattered people. Her companion reached for her hand but she drew it away while her eyes led him on. She looked at him sideways, turning her head ever so slightly and smiling the while; and then, suddenly, looked him full in the face, her own face very earnest, and her wide-open eyes shining with a thousand points of blue light.

"The Pharisees," she said, "teach the Unwritten Law, and yet the Book of Deuteronomy says plainly: 'You shall not add to the word which I command you.'" And she mocked at the Pharisees for a belief in angels: in body like the wind or like the flames of fire! And for the teaching that the dead will live again: "As grass," she said, "will grow on a paved street."

In the moonlight they looked down upon the pavement of flat roofs on the slopes before them: the white houses of Jerusalem crowded together with its narrow winding streets of stairs and steep lanes. "The king and all men of sense," she said, "see the hope of our country in making it rich and strong. Such a country as Parthia would wish for as an ally. Or Rome."

III

THE Feast of Booths is a festival of thanksgiving for what has been gathered from threshing-floor and wine-press; and the people made themselves booths—as they are commanded in the Torah—of the branches of thick trees and of palms and of the willows of the brook: everyone upon the roof of his house or in his court that they might remember how they had lived in booths when the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt.

And Jerusalem was crowded with pilgrims who had come with their sacrifices to see Alexander Jannai, the king and high priest, sacrifice for the nation: a crush of joyous people on the stairs of the streets, holding palm leaves and branches of willows and twigs of myrtle as well as citrons—symbols of the fruit of a goodly tree with which to rejoice before the Lord. The king, in his purple robe of high priest with its fringe of golden bells and pomegranates—a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, his broad girdle embroidered with flowers and threads of gold, wore the high priest's breastplate of twelve precious stones, each cut with the name of a tribe of Israel, and on his linen cap the triple crown with its whorl of golden leaves.

In the days of the prophet Samuel, when he judged the people in Mizpah, the Israelites drew water and poured it out before the Lord for rain. Now the land of Israel, unlike Egypt, is watered by rain, and on the Feast of Booths after the long summer the Pharisees, many living in the mean quarters of the cities, held much by this libation: their own small cisterns almost dry. Three blasts on the ram's horn greeted the

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procession bringing water from the fountain of Siloam to the Water Gate; and the worshippers watched the king, as high priest, take the golden flask up to the great altar and turn to the golden basins—one for water and the other for wine. But Alexander Jannai poured the water on the ground and, as some reported, upon his feet: out of contempt, perhaps, for the Pharisees.

The Pharisees pelted the king with citrons. Straightway the king and high priest, grandson of Simon and grand-nephew of Judah the Maccabee, sent for his mercenaries—heathen from the mountains of Asia Minor—who had been drawn up beyond the walls of the Temple.

With stony faces and naked swords
they ran into the sacred grounds
cutting down the worshippers.

Bodies of young and old were lying
everywhere:
holiday garments stained with blood
and blood gathering in pools
on the stone flags of the court and flowing
into
the gutters
over the scattered palm leaves
and branches of willows
and the twigs of myrtle.

That night there were no lamps, no candles,
in the Women's Court of the Temple—
so many burning
every courtyard in the city used to be alight;
no pious men danced
with burning torches in their hands
singing to the Lord, while the Levites on
the steps
played on harps and lutes, sounded their
cymbals and trumpets,
answering psalm with psalm; and every heart
was glad.
So that it was a saying:
he who did not see this
never saw true rejoicing.

IV

DEMETRIUS of Damascus, with the Pharisees to help him, was ready enough to war against Alexander Jannai; and the army of the king scattered in flight. Alexander Jannai, too, fled into the mountains. Then the Pharisees with Demetrius left him, not to march farther into Judea against fellow Jews and a Jewish king.

Pharisees still troublesome in the cities and countryside were brought to Jerusalem in chains; and Alexander Jannai's workmen set up rows of crosses in a place beyond the city for the punishment Palestine had learnt from the Macedonian kings of Syria. (But it was rumored that the king would set the Pharisees free as Joseph once freed his brothers in Egypt.) Two or three days before the festival of Passover the Pharisees were brought from their dungeons, befouled and dreadfully pale, and with them their kin imprisoned also; and all were led beyond the city into the bright sunshine among the blossoms of the spring.

The spectators began to weep and sob as the prisoners were halted in the wood of crosses. One of the Pharisees was heard saying: "How beautiful the world is! I had hardly noticed it." And the man's companion said: "It is written in the Song of Songs: 'love is as strong as death.' If a man dies for love of God, thinking with all his might only of the Lord, will he feel his wounds?"

Stoning, burning, strangling, or the sword: none of "the four deaths" of Jewish law has the pain of crucifixion. But it was the custom of the Jews to have the condemned drink of wine and frankincense and go to his death benumbed. Without more ado, however, the executioners began hoisting the Pharisees upon the crosses and driving the shrieking nails through hands and feet; seized upon wives and children to cut their throats.

Above, from the gardens of the king,
the king and his courtiers and their women
sat watching the executions.
Wine and baskets of fruit and cakes
were brought to the tables;
and, as they ate and drank,
they sang the songs of love and the drinking
songs
of Alexandria and Damascus.
The sky was bright and blue that day
and at evening a deeper blue
as star after star began to shine.
The guards who were to watch the Pharisees
twisting in their slow death
gathered in a hollow
out of the wind.

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V

An officer of the Jews besieging Ragab saw in a growing cloud of dust a heavy litter and the horsemen riding slowly on all sides. The queen! He went into the king's tent with steps that fell softly on the carpet. Alexander Jannai lay under a sealskin, bony forehead and black hair wet with sweat, trembling for cold in the heat of noon; his hands on the covering plucking at the fur.

The leather curtains of the litter parted although the heavy wheels had not come to a stop, and the queen stepped out before anyone could help her to the ground. The officers caught a glimpse of a round rouged face, wet with tears, under the long veil flowing in the wind as she went towards the king's tent with a quick firm tread.

It was said, afterwards, that the dying king advised Salome, his queen, to make her peace with the Pharisees. Be this as it may, she sent for her brother, ben-Shatah, who had sat in the Sanhedrin and had answered the king: "The Wisdom that I serve makes me your equal." She sent also for the other leaders of the Pharisees—in exile among the Arabs and in Egypt; and queen and Pharisees ruled the land.

Many quoted the psalm: "weeping may
  lodge for a night
but joy comes in the morning."
Yet some said: not a palm tree in Judea
to which the horse of a Persian would not
  be tied,
and not a coffin in the land
from which the horse of a Mede
would not be eating straw.

The Pharisees gave Alexander Jannai a burial worthy of a better king. His tomb with its round turret—the roof curving inward to a spire—is in the valley to the east of Jerusalem among the cedars.

VI

The wall about the Temple—towards the north—had heavy square towers and a dry moat before it. Pompey sent for his engines, the catapults and battering-rams that were at Tyre; and his soldiers began building a bank between his camp and the wall; and beams and boulders and bundles of twigs were thrown into the moat daily. Nor did the Romans wait for the siege engines but were building others, cutting down all the trees of the neighborhood—"the trees of gladness" as a poet of the Jews had called them.

The pounding of the battering-rams against a corner of the tower, tallest of all, from which the archers guarded the entrance to the Temple, was beginning to show in cracks between the heavy stones. On a Sabbath, under the blows of the ram, the tower crashed. Brass trumpets sounding the attack, the waiting Romans scrambled over the great stones and through the cloud of dust: first, a son of Sulla with a great force behind him. Elsewhere, along the wall, centurions and their men were climbing it on the scaling-ladders.

Pompey stopped to smile at an inscription in Greek beside the gate—"No foreigner may pass. The guilt for his death will be his own!"—and entered the court of the Temple, followed by his trumpeter. The Jews defending the Temple who did not fall at the breach or on the wall were driven into a corner of the great court and were leaping from the wall into a ravine to die upon the rocks below.

The priests and Levites went about the Sabbath service as if that Sabbath were like any other (so, during the siege, they had offered the sacrifices twice a day—let rocks and arrows fall where they might). The offerings were carried on in silence; in caps of linen and long linen coats and broad girdles embroidered with flowers, scarlet, purple and blue. Frantic like the fish that eat men when blood is in the water, the armored Romans turned upon the priests and Levites and killed them.

The Romans went into the Temple: gazed at the golden candlestick, almost the height of a man, with its seven heavy branches; at the table of gold on which the loaves of the shewbread lay; and at the chests in which were heaped spices and the half-shekels sent by Jews everywhere to buy the sacrifices. And Pompey went behind the heavy curtain of fine linen, embroidered with blue, purple and scarlet flowers, into the gloom of the Holy of Holies, sword in hand, to see the God of the Jews—and found an empty room.

Then the legions marched away from
  Jerusalem:

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at the head of each
rode a tribune
with red or black plumes on his helmet;
behind each tribune, on foot, the first centurion
with the legion's eagle of silver or bronze on a staff;
stocky soldier trudging beside stocky soldier,
sinewy men
used to hard work, plain living and pain.

Their leather coats, heavy with bands of iron or brass,
over sleeveless woolen shirts;
a greave of bronze on the right leg
(for this was the forward leg in battle),
and their feet in heavy sandals;
a heavy square shield of wood plated with iron
hung at each man's left (the badge of his cohort,
a bright wreath or a thunderbolt, perhaps, painted about the boss,
but now, on the march, under a leather cover);

at his right, hanging from a shoulder belt,
the short heavy sword, two-edged and pointed,
good for thrusting; his heavy spear—square wooden shaft and its iron taken apart—
on the legionary's shoulder; his helmet of iron or leather with bands of brass
hanging on his breast; and his other belongings in bundles:
woolen cloak, a pan for baking, a handmill, perhaps, and his ration of grain for a number of days,
saw, spade, and ax, a sickle, cord, and baskets,
all tied to the long forked stick on his shoulder, too—
the stick soldiers jokingly called "my mule."

The legion's horses and mules followed it
with its heavy tents of leather and the scaling-ladders,
and mule after mule laden with sacks of grain;
then cattle and sheep in droves and the carts of the merchants.
After the legions came the Spanish soldiers
in jerkins of leather
with small round targets instead of heavy shields; barefoot Numidians carrying darts;
men from the Balearic Islands with slings;
and archers from Crete and Syria without shields or helmets
but with heavy sleeves of leather;
and last lumbered the engines
that had broken down the great tower of the Temple
and the walls of many cities and great fortresses.

Now with this legion, now with that,
Pompey rode among the young noblemen
who had come from Rome to study the art of war.
His lictor, scribe, and servants followed him,
and his trumpeter
with the horn of a wild-ox and silver mouthpiece,
and a standard-bearer
with Pompey's white standard
and his name on it in red.

The river Kishon swept them away,
the ancient river, the river Kishon.
O my soul,
you have trodden down strength!

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THE LIBERAL RELIGIOUS IMPULSE IN ISRAEL: II

Interviews with Ben Gurion and Some Others

HERBERT WEINER

JERUSALEM: Have been speaking with M.K.'s—Members of the Knesset—in the cafeteria of the Knesset building. The atmosphere there, with the legislators struggling for service at the little food counter, is reminiscent of a Second Avenue café. Rachel Zabari has been introducing me to her fellow M.K.'s and has been very helpful in getting discussions going. Our technique is to grab a table, set out some tea, and catch our prospects as they go by. Yesterday Shazar, the Minister of Education, was drawn into the discussion and gave his opinion: "By all means send some people from your liberal Judaism movement here. You can learn much from us and take a great deal back." But as for any need for liberal religion in Israel—"When I have a yen for religion, I know two or three nice Hasidic *shtieblach* where I can go and satisfy my soul."

Rachel pointed out to him that sentimental journeys to the *shtiebel* could mean nothing to someone like her, a Yemenite, or for that matter to most Israeli youth, and where were they to go to satisfy their religious "yens"? Shazar shrugged his shoulders.

Today I met another M.K., Yizhar Smilenski, a native Israeli and gifted young writer. He looks the perfect sabra, broad shoulders, tousled hair falling over a boyish face, and shirt open at the throat. He listened carefully as I tried to explain the interest of liberal religious groups abroad in the religious problems of Israel. I told him I was not here because American Jewry had solved all its spiritual problems and wished to make Israel a gift of its wisdom, but because despite our "dynamic" communal and institutional expansion we were looking for new sources of spirit, and wondered if perhaps the two Jewries, American and Israeli, could seek them in some sort together.

"Near Tel Aviv," Smilenski responded, "we dug some wells for water. We tried to draw more water from them than they were capable of giving, and soon found ourselves drawing up brine. The ocean had begun to seep into the wells."

I tried to qualify his analogy by suggesting that while the pressure of the American environment might sometimes appear to be overwhelming, it could often act in a different way, as a sort of "primer," starting the pump of religious aspiration to bringing up fresh spiritual water.

Before he left, I asked him about the "something" for which I had heard so many Israelis were yearning. Was it religion? "Did you ever attend a funeral here?" he asked. "A funeral, after all, is one of those moments when one's heart is most open to religious experience. Well, one contact with the *chevra kadisha* [ordained burial society] and what was open is sealed—for good!"

THERE may be some students at the Hebrew University here in Jerusalem interested in discussing religion, but I'm having a hard time finding them. It is strange that there is so little religious ferment in a place favored by so fine a collection of teachers and spirits: Hugo Bergmann, Ernst Simon, Gershom Scholem, Martin Buber, and the late Judah Magnes, a Reform rabbi and first president of the University. A few years ago

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IN OUR last issue, HERBERT WEINER, rabbi of Temple Israel in South Orange, New Jersey, discussed rank and file sentiment in Israel toward liberal Judaism, and toward religion generally. Here, in a second article likewise based on the diary he kept during a recent trip to Israel commissioned by the World Union for Progressive Judaism, Rabbi Weiner records the complex of feelings of some of the spiritual and lay leaders of the state on the same subject—especially those of David Ben Gurion, whom he visited in his Negev retreat. Rabbi Weiner was born in Boston, in 1919, and attended the University of Massachusetts, the Jewish Institute of Religion, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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a circle of students and teachers used to gather at the home of Joseph Bentwich for discussions, but these meetings no longer take place. I asked Hugo Bergmann, who is a professor of philosophy, why nothing seemed to have come out of them.

"I don't know," he replied, reflecting again on a problem that has concerned him for many years; "perhaps it was too abstract."

We had met in the book-lined study of his home, and I asked him to suggest something concrete that might be done to stimulate religious liberalism in Israel. He leaned back from his desk—a dignified, white-haired man with thoughtful gray eyes—and there was a long pause. Finally he offered: "A magazine, perhaps. A magazine to acquaint Israelis with new trends in religious thought."

Why have the students been so indifferent to the religious attitudes of men like Bergmann, Simon, Buber, and others at the University—their teachers, after all? Possibly the unpopular political views of these men—who had been mainstays of the pre-war bi-nationalist Ihud movement—have brought on a hostility to their ideas in other realms of the spirit. Whatever the reason, it is clear that the sabra lacks all "thirst" for religion.

* * *

Interlude at Sdeh Boker: For months now there has been speculation about the possibility of Ben Gurion's returning from the Negev to resume his place in Israeli political life. [Ben Gurion came out of retirement to assume the post of Minister of Defense in February 1955.] I have just returned from a "pilgrimage" to Sdeh Boker, Ben Gurion's kibbutz, having gone there Friday afternoon and been detained till the next day for reasons of military security. Our chauffeur was irritated at the delay, but for me it turned out to be a marvelous experience.

We traveled out to Sdeh Boker in the black Dodge the government had presented to "B.G." Chaim, who usually drives the car, met me in the lobby of my hotel and told me that Mrs. Ben Gurion was in the back seat returning to her kibbutz after a few days in Tel Aviv.

"*Shalom,*" I said, opening the front door and gingerly pushing aside the tommy gun lying across the seat.

"*Shalom,*" Paula Ben Gurion replied. "Are you a rabbi? I hate rabbis, they are all hypocrites."

I had heard that Mrs. Ben Gurion was not famous for her diplomacy, and anyway I knew she was half joking—but still, it was only half a joke.

"Well," I said, punning weakly, "I'm a *rav m'tukan*"—(*m'tukan* in Hebrew meaning both "reform" and "adjusted").

"They are just as bad." But by now I was inside the car, where I could see the broad, good-natured lines of her face, and felt more at ease. We drove a few blocks farther to pick another passenger up, a friend of Ben Gurion's, which precipitated a momentary social crisis. "I brought a young girl from my kibbutz along," said the friend to Paula, stooping down to the car window.

"What, you brought a friend?" Paula groaned. "How will we take her—where is the room? You should have asked if we had room. The car is filled with luggage."

"Well, if there's no room it's all right," the man said in embarrassment, for the girl was standing near him. "I told her that there might not be room."

Paula uttered a few more loud sighs and finally said, "*Nu*—let's move over." But by this time the young girl, who had overheard the conversation—it was not hard to overhear Paula—was gone. The friend wanted to leave without her, assuring us that she had other places to go, but Paula would not have it. "Go find her," she told Chaim imperiously. He spent the next few minutes searching for the girl, and finally found her.

Once we had all settled back and were well on our way, Paula began to regale us with her recent adventures in Tel Aviv. She had been to see the American production of *Porgy and Bess* that week. "The American ambassador invited me as his personal guest. So much fuss. I even dressed up and wore my ermine wrap. This is the second time I have ever worn it. A rich American gave it to me several years ago, but when do I have a chance to wear such things?" She continued to tell us about *Porgy and Bess* as the car sped along a highway flanked by eucalyptus trees. These trees had been Ben Gurion's idea; they grew fast and could shield troop movements from enemy observation as well as afford a pleasant shade to the road.

When we came to Beer Sheba, the streets were already empty in anticipation of the Sabbath. Only one restaurant was still open,

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and we ordered some tea while Chaim made arrangements at the police station for the military escort which was to accompany us in the next lap of the journey through the Negev to Sdeh Boker.

Paula lost no time in asking the waiter why the cups weren't clean, but he evidently knew who she was and took it all good-naturedly.

THE road from Beer Sheba runs through barren land, and we passed one of the oil derricks now under construction whose progress the whole country was eagerly watching. Paula kept assuring me that "it is not too late—we may still run into some shooting." After an hour of traveling, we saw the thirty-odd wooden shacks, surrounded by a barbed wire fence, which has been the home of the former prime minister and his wife for over eighteen months now. At the gate, our military escort turned around and we drove into the settlement alone. The guard, who was standing some yards away, waved us by. Paula was incensed. "What idiocy not to look and see who is in the car." Chaim protested that the guard recognized our car, but Paula was still angry. "How can they know from a distance? They have to realize that Ben Gurion is here and not be so sloppy.—Well, how do you like my garden?" she said, interrupting the outburst and waving to the empty expanse all around.

We drove up to one of the wooden cottages and Ben Gurion came out to greet us. He was wearing khaki pants and a heavy white sweater which he later told us was made from the wool of the settlement's sheep. "The Old Man," as the young people like to call him, appeared to be in good health, and after greeting us briefly, went with his wife into their cottage. My two companions on the trip and I strolled over to some wooden stalls and watched two boys and a girl feeding the few hundred sheep and goats that are Sdeh Boker's chief occupation.

The man who was visiting Ben Gurion with me had once been a shepherd on a kibbutz, and he watched the evening feeding of the animals with interest. When one of the boys called out, "Bakbuki—here, bottle-baby," and placed a nursing bottle into an eagerly upturned mouth, I asked him why. He explained that in cases where the mother had no milk to give its offspring, bottle-feeding was necessary. I decided not to ask whether it was a lamb or kid that was being fed—I was too ashamed to confess I couldn't tell the difference. We watched quietly while the three young kibbutzniks went efficiently about their work.

Darkness had fallen. It was Sabbath now, and some stars began to twinkle in the night sky. They were the stars, I couldn't help thinking, that Abraham must have seen in the Negev when he heard a voice saying, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars, if thou be able to count them. . . ." It is hard not to slip back and forth in time like this in Israel. The "baas" of the lambs and goats, the barbed wire fence about, the guns and ammunition hung along the inside of the sheep stall—it all seemed almost too much like what it was supposed to be.

A bell rang and we walked towards the dining room. As we approached we could hear singing, and I was surprised to recognize a traditional Sabbath hymn. But this seemed to be all there was of tradition. There were no candles in the room. The young people sitting at the rows of wooden tables were dressed in clean khaki clothes, some wearing white woolen sweaters. Most of them were members of "Nachal"—boys and girls in army units who worked on the land as part of their military training. They ranged in age from seventeen to the early twenties. I sat between Mrs. Ben Gurion and her husband, who, apart from a few sharp comments on people who insisted on calling themselves Zionists and were yet unwilling to come to Israel, did not say much during the meal. He seemed to enjoy the few potatoes, vegetables, and the small piece of meat served in honor of the Sabbath. I found the meat almost impossible to chew. But one of the boys pointed out that in this kibbutz they at least enjoyed hot meals on the Sabbath—a luxury not permitted in the army, whose messes were operated under strictly Orthodox supervision.

AFTER we finished the meal, B.G. invited me to his house and we walked over to his small cottage. Paula insisted on showing me through each of the three rooms and appealed to me to admire her chintz curtains and colorful rugs. Ben Gurion's study was filled with books in Hebrew, English, Span-

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ish, Greek, and other languages. He sat behind a modern blond wood desk on which piles of books, magazines, and papers were neatly arranged. He was not at all officious, but I had the feeling that he had neither the talent nor the inclination for chit-chat, and so I came directly to the point of my visit. He began to talk quickly, almost irritably, as if he were weary of being asked the same old questions over and over. Quite a number of other rabbis, he told me, had come to him with this same question. "I told them, and I tell you," his voice rose oratorically, "we need to have liberal Judaism in Israel. The state needs it for the sake of religious freedom and freedom of conscience. Come and set up a liberal synagogue. Let the youth here see something else besides *them*. Ach," his voice dropped, "I tell you, I know them. Most of them don't have God in their hearts." His wife came into the room carrying a broken flour sifter and asked if we could fix it. I reached for it, but B.G. was ahead of me; he seized the sifter and started to bang it against the desk, declining any assistance from me. "Not with strength and not with might," he said, as his face grew red with exertion, "but with common sense." After a few minutes of effort there was a click, and with a grunt of satisfaction he returned the utensil to his wife. We resumed our conversation.

I asked him if he would be willing to associate himself officially with a liberal religious movement. He shook his head. "No, my way has always been to ask of anyone else only that which I am prepared to do myself. And I am not a synagogue Jew. During the last High Holy Days I did go to services, to be together with the soldiers here, and I read the prayers carefully—some of them are magnificent but some absolutely horrible. But I can understand," he went on, "how other people might need religion. I have a daughter-in-law, an English girl who was originally Christian. Now she lights candles every Friday night. She feels the need to express her Judaism this way. But as for me and my son, her husband—to live here and to fight and work for the land is enough for us." He mused for a moment, then added, "I am sure Moses believed God spoke to him, and perhaps there is a God, but I just can't believe God really spoke to him. However, these views of mine have nothing to do with the principle of freedom of religion here. You know, we faced this question at the beginning of the state. There was a problem of phraseology in the Declaration of Independence. Rabbi Maimon had insisted that the first proclamation of the Jewish state must mention God; he wanted to include the phrase 'Rock and Redeemer of Israel.' Sisling, a Mapamnik, who happens to be the son of a rabbi, insisted that God was not responsible for the coming into being of the state and wanted no credit given him. I finally suggested that they compromise and use only the words 'Rock of Israel' which each group might interpret according to its own philosophy. So it was."

We talked a while longer and I asked him what there would be left to link the Jewries of America and Israel together if in the end the Yishuv could offer only the alternatives of Ben Gurion's nationalism or a rigid Orthodoxy. He frowned. "It is *the* problem." Then, hesitating a moment, he continued, "Hebrew—Hebrew must be our connection." It was an answer I had heard before, from Shazar, for instance, but I had the feeling that B.G. was not really convinced by it. Perhaps somewhere in his mind he had already settled for there being no connection—and no Jewry outside of Israel with which to connect.

We talked a bit more about the ways and means of introducing liberal Judaism into the country. Ben Gurion was not enthusiastic about setting up experimental study groups or youth centers. "A synagogue must be built, a liberal synagogue, plain and unvarnished." And then somehow we got on to Maimonides. Israel had just begun celebrating the 750th anniversary of his death. B.G. said of him: "Oh, a great mind. You know, the Rambam could easily, as he said, have proven that the world was created *ex nihilo* according to the Bible." He was referring to the medieval dispute over the Aristotelian and Jewish concepts of creation. He reached over to the little Bible on the corner of his desk. "There is actually one element, you know, which is not created, according to the Bible." He started reading from the first chapter of Genesis. "Water," he pointed out, "is not mentioned as having been created; this passage could be interpreted as saying that it existed before the creation."

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Suddenly he looked at his watch. "Oh, oh, I almost forgot. You will have to excuse me, but I must make my readings." We said "*Shalom.*" He reached into his desk for a flashlight and hurried outside—to measure the dewfall and temperature, which was one of his duties in the kibbutz.

"I DON'T ask anybody else to do what I won't do myself." This is a big statement, but perhaps B.G. has earned the right to make it. Recently he had concluded an appeal for the revival of the pioneering spirit with one of his favorite quotations: "A righteous man shall live by his faith." And he had given the phrase a twist which made many a listener uncomfortable. It is not a man's ideology, his "faith," that is the test, but his willingness to "live by his faith": to come to Israel if he preaches Zionism, and to live in the Negev if he thinks the Negev should be settled.

I left the little house and walked across the field to the room where I was to spend the night. One of the members of the kibbutz had gone to the city for a few days; I was to sleep in his bed. There were two young boys sitting on the other bed when I came in. They greeted me and watched me unpack my bag. There was a knock on the door, and two other boys sauntered in. I reached into my bag for some cognac, which may or may not have been helping my week-old cold, and asked the boys if they would join me. They hesitated. Then one of them rather bashfully accepted, poured a little into a cup, and, to my surprise, put his hand upon his head and offered a blessing. He drank, and passed the cup along to the lad standing near him who awkwardly went through the same ritual. It suddenly dawned on me that they must have heard I was a rabbi and had taken my invitation as a suggestion that we make Kiddush together on the Sabbath. The cup went the rounds, and everyone blessed it. I asked one of the boys, a tall serious-faced lad from Tel Aviv, if he preferred the kibbutz to the city. He shrugged his shoulders. "It's all right." I asked him whether he had come because he felt it was his duty, and he shrugged his shoulders again. The boy sitting near him spoke for him. "Of course, that's why he came. He just doesn't want to say. Somebody has to come here."

Outside a bell rang and the boys told me that a special Sabbath program had been prepared for the evening. We went outside and walked toward the darkened dining room. Inside I saw that the electric lights had been switched off, and in their place three candles were burning on a table in the far corner of the room. Behind this table sat two girls and three boys with some books open before them. As my eyes became accustomed to the candlelight, I could see the others sitting on benches along the walls. They were singing a mournful song about the Negev, about the dew and blood with which it had been sprinkled. They finished and there was a moment of silence. Then one of the girls whose blond hair and spectacles glinted softly in the candlelight announced in a low husky Hebrew that this Sabbath eve was dedicated to the memory of the "thirty-five." She was referring to the thirty-five Hebrew University students who had been killed by Arabs at the beginning of the war when they tried to bring help to a kibbutz near Hebron. There was another pause after this, and from the other end of the table a boy with Yemenite features, large dark eyes, and curly black hair, began to read "*L'Dovid,*" a Psalm of David. "Blessed be the Lord my Rock, Who skills my hands for battle, my fingers for war. . . . Deliver me out of many waters, from the hands of strangers. . . ." "Then a shot was heard outside. Coming at that moment it seemed almost appropriate. Several of the young soldiers left the room immediately. Everyone waited and listened, but there was silence. The young soldier finished his reading. Then a girl read a poem about the "thirty-five."

Again there was a pause, and then another song. Somebody called out that they ought to have some dancing and everybody laughed—the proportion of boys to girls was about five to one—and they went on singing. There was a final song, evidently their favorite—they sang it over at least a dozen times: "When Ben Gurion puts on *tefillin,* and Sdeh Boker keeps the Sabbath, and Moshe Sharett takes up ballet, then will the Messiah come."

A sturdy blond boy stood up and offered to organize some games. They played blind-man's buff and the room rang with laughter. The games were still going on when I left the room and walked out into the night.

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It was impossible to turn in and I walked over toward the barbed wire fence. My thoughts spun round—so young, these boys and girls, yet exposed at any moment to the very tragedies of which they sang.

I WALKED back to the little room in which I was to spend the night. My young roommate had thoughtfully left a light burning for me. I noticed copies of *Moby Dick* and *War and Peace,* in English, among his things, along with some agricultural manuals and a few Hebrew books. And on top of the bookcase stood two hand grenades, apparently for decoration. The evening's events kept me awake. There was something in them deeply relevant, I felt, to the questions whose answers I was seeking in Israel—but what?

I remembered how when I came to Israel, the papers had been filled with accounts of the fighting around the clubhouse built by the Histadrut near the Orthodox Mea Shearim quarter of Jerusalem. The Orthodox claimed the building was a deliberate provocation, an attempt to demoralize their youth, while the Histadrut stood on its rights. A commission, appointed to find a way of ending the ugly fights that occurred almost daily, proposed building a wall around the clubhouse to shut the two groups out of each other's sight. But a wall already existed, not only between the extremist Neturei Karta and the Histadrut, but between all that was associated with religion—rabbis, synagogues, and prayer books—and the rest of Israel, in which latter category was that very Yemenite boy who had read a Psalm of David in the Negev. For were you to suggest that there was something of religion in the life of this boy working in the Negev and reading from the Psalms, the Orthodox would protest, "But he carries a gun on the Sabbath and eats no kosher food"; and what is more, the boy would agree with them. What have the daily problems of a soldier in the Negev to do with prayer and God and religion? No, the religious problem was not the ugly fracas around the clubhouse, nor adjustments in ritual, nor even the laws establishing religious control over marriage and divorce. The problem was this towering wall, accepted by both the religious and the secular camps in Israel, between the ideals and values of the average Israeli and the spiritual and religious matrix from which they had once sprung. And joined with this was what Ben Gurion called *the* problem of Jewish history: the growing split between an Israeli community which feels no need for religion and the Jewish community in the West which seems destined to conceive of its Jewish identification more and more in exclusively religious terms. What would be the effect on Jewish life in America of an Israel that would proclaim to Jews and all the world that the Jewish religion was irrelevant and outmoded? For wasn't this the meaning of what was going on in Israel? How long could the bustle of organization and the large membership lists of synagogues in America disguise the knowledge that at the center of it all was a religion that was not meeting one of its greatest tests?

There was no bell the next morning, for it was Sabbath, but the Negev sun awakened me early enough to see B.G. again out measuring the dewfall. After breakfast, B.G. and I, with Chaim at the wheel, rode out to a nearby canyon. We stood for a while following the play of color that faded away into the far blue hills of Trans-Jordan. On the way back we paused at a little mound of stones marking the spot where five boys had been killed last year. B.G. noticed me staring about at the barren hills. "Depressing, eh?" he asked with a smile.

It was terribly bleak, and I wondered if Ben Gurion himself wasn't also depressed. Only a few months ago, when it became obvious that few Israelis were inspired by his example to come to the Negev, he had gone to them making a tour of the villages and settlements to enlist volunteers. But less than two hundred had come forward, some of them old-time Zionists who left their families to serve temporarily in the new settlement. I looked at the ruddy face of the "Old Man," the famous chin so determinedly set. He had seen more fantastic dreams than the settlement in the Negev come true, and in any case "a good man lives by his faith."

Back at the settlement I prepared to leave. Paula came out in her red bathrobe to say goodbye, and agreed to be photographed with her husband if someone would lend her a comb. We took some pictures and said *"Shalom."* Driving out, we passed the

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two boys who had made a blessing over the cognac the night before. They looked bored, walking around the small barbed wire enclosure. I could not help wondering whether a prayer service or some readings from Isaiah that Sabbath morning might not have added a dimension of meaning to the bleakness of life in Sdeh Boker.

* * *

Haifa: I have been saving Haifa for the last stage of my "survey" because I was told that I might find some practical suggestions here for introducing liberal Judaism into Israel.

My first meeting was with Dr. Elk, a former liberal rabbi in Germany who now directs a school. I attended some classes and they were excellent. The school is the hard-won result of Elk's lonely battle to build an educational institution outside the politics and ideologies that dominate most of Israel's schools. A vigorous, clean-shaven man in his fifties, Elk lost no time in assuring me that a liberal synagogue in Haifa was both desirable and possible. But his own experience had made him realistic. "We need the help of someone who is not dependent upon Israelis for his income," he advised. He was frank about his own financial troubles with the representatives of liberal religion in America who sometimes supply funds for his school. One American businessman, when asked to help, had said, "I don't know if we're backing the right horse." Dr. Elk couldn't get over the Americanese. "He didn't know if he had the *right horse.*"

The next two evenings saw meetings at the home of Carl Alpert, who is public relations director of the Haifa Technion. Joseph Bentwich was there and had a suggestion: "If American Jewry wants to help, they should send sixty liberal religious young people here to form a settlement on the land."

A tall, bearded man with large sad eyes, who had been a chaplain in the Israeli army, said: "There is no institution in Israel to which a person can turn for help in his personal problems. The emphasis is always on community and group needs. There is 'no comforter' in sadness, and no sharing of happiness." There was an immediate "Amen" to this from everybody.

THE taxi driver who took me to the top of the Carmel had a difficult time finding David Pinsky Street. He kept muttering the name "Pinsky . . . Pinsky" as we circled around. Finally he stopped his car to inquire and came back, face glowing in triumph, to announce that he had been "right all along—they had just renamed the street a few days ago."

General Yaakov Dori, former commander-in-chief of the Haganah and now president of the Haifa Technion, has a handsome home on Carmel, tastefully decorated in modern style with furniture, his wife told me, all made in Israel. Dori has the air of a vigorous American businessman about him, someone who likes to get straight to the point. I asked him if he was just being kind by entertaining Reform rabbis from America, or whether it was true, as I had heard, that he was interested in liberal Judaism.

"I will try to explain to you exactly how I feel," he said, speaking swiftly. "I came to Israel as a very young boy and like the others received a good education in the Bible, but no religion. Nor was I ever interested in religion. Nor am I fanatically interested now. But with the coming of the state, certain things have happened. Until then we had our work to do, and it completely occupied us. The task of each moment was meaningful enough to fulfill our lives. We established our state. There is much yet to be built, but everybody knows now that this is it, this is life in the Jewish state, and lo and behold it leaves something unfulfilled and unsatisfied. It is evident there are problems in life that cannot be solved by great events or by politics. I don't say that religion can solve them either, but they are problems that religion at least deals with. And if there were here on Mount Carmel a synagogue with prayer services arranged aesthetically, and with religious ideas interpreted in a way that could be meaningful to my life and times, I would certainly be interested in going. The world of the Orthodox synagogue—it's just a foreign world to me. We have nothing in common." Before leaving, I asked General Dori if he would associate himself officially with a group searching for a modern expression of religion in Israel. "Definitely," was his answer.

THERE is no question but that Haifa is *the* place in Israel to launch an experimental

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program of activities, including a liberal synagogue. It can draw upon the youth of Dr. Elk's school and upon a number of intellectual leaders. Certainly it is only through such indigenous leadership that anything might be done here. Haifa is the natural center, not only because the opposition of Orthodoxy would be weakest here, but because the city in general sees itself as Herzl saw it, "the city of the future."

* * *

Jerusalem: On the way to visit Zvi Yehuda Kuk, I stopped at a store to buy some gifts and came across a beautifully preserved hand-written Yemenite prayer book. On the inside leaf was written: "Cast me not off in my old age. Oh my strength, do not forsake me." I took the book along with me to show Zvi Yehuda.

Everything looked much the same in the yeshiva of Rav Kuk, where I had spent so many pleasant days two years ago with the son of the late Chief Rabbi.* I passed a few students in the main room bent over their books, and went down the dimly lit hall to the rooms where Zvi Yehuda Kuk's sister and her husband, the present head of the yeshiva, live. Zvi Yehuda was there eating his supper. He looked much thinner and older. Although almost two years had gone by, he recognized me and jumped up from his supper to clasp my hand. His sister, who resembles their famous father more than her brother, brought out some oranges and we sat around the dining room table. I asked him if he had not been disturbed by the article I had written in COMMENTARY about his father. He placed his hand on mine and smiled. "*Chevraman*. What a *chevraman*," he smiled. "No, it was all right. A few words of his letters might have been differently translated, but it was all right."

I had been thinking of telling Zvi Yehuda why I came to Israel this time. I wondered how he would respond. Like his father he tries to see sparks of holiness in the activities of almost any Jewish group, but I suppose it would be too much to expect him to embrace liberal Judaism in Israel within his range of tolerance. But I did know that Orthodox Jews like Zvi Yehuda were heartbroken at the wall that seems to be mounting ever higher between their religious world and the bulk of Israel's population.

"I know your father believed that the light would eventually come," I said, "but do you think it really is inevitable that it will come? Isn't there the possibility that we may destroy for good the possibility of its coming?"

He smiled and placed his hand on mine as in the days when we were studying his father's writings together. "My father," he replied softly, "used to interpret the First Commandment, 'Thou shalt not worship other Gods—*elohim acherim*,' by translating the word '*acherim*' as '*m'acherim*,' which means 'delaying.' By worshipping other Gods we may *delay* the coming of the light, but not prevent its ultimate coming."

I showed him the Yemenite prayer book I had just bought. He and his brother-in-law looked at it with interest. I was going to show him the inscription on the front cover, but again something held me back. We spoke a while longer. When I rose to leave, he took my arm and accompanied me to the door outside. He stood on the steps waving his hand and murmuring, "A successful journey, a good and successful journey."

* * *

Enroute home: The last few hours on the plane have been spent alternating between thoughts about the "survey" and turning the pages of the Yemenite prayer book I bought in Jerusalem. The copyist, working only with black and red ink, had illuminated the letters with infinite care. It is remarkable how little difference there is between this prayer book written in Yemen, and the standard *Siddur* used by the Jew in Warsaw or Minsk. Can it be that this book holds most of the secret of Jewish unity throughout the centuries?

One hymn in the Yemenite prayer book, not included in the Ashkenazic version, caught my eye with its simple refrain: "Thou art the Flame, I the straw—and who should have mercy upon the straw if not the Flame. Thou art Pure, I sinful—and who should have mercy upon the sinful if not the Pure. Thou art the Supporter, I the falling one—and who should have mercy upon the falling one if not the Supporter. Thou art the Shepherd, I the flock. . . ." I wonder what the author of this hymn would think of religious "surveys" and projects to stimulate liberal Judaism in Israel?

*See my article, "Rav Kuk's Path to Peace Within Israel" in COMMENTARY of March 1954.

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London: Yesterday I talked with Yigal Yadin, the former commander-in-chief of the Israeli army. I found him locked in his bathroom developing some archaeological photographs he had taken that day in the Oxford Museum. I found it difficult to use his military title when I spoke to him, for, despite a receding hairline, he looks no older than thirty. His wife, a pretty girl in gray slacks, dangled her legs over the side of her chair and listened to our discussion. Yadin said that since living in England he has become keenly conscious of the need for a spiritual relation between Israel and the other Jewish communities, especially now that the financial and political ties are beginning to weaken. But as to the contribution religion could make to this problem, he simply hadn't thought too much about it. "Whatever the objective, however," he said in good military form, "the proper tactic to use is the Bible. The Bible is the key to the sabra."

I thought then of the Yemenite soldier reading from the Psalm of David in the Negev, "Blessed be the Lord my Rock, Who skills my fingers for war." Now that I think of it, the boy had not read the whole psalm, but only certain verses. Other verses, referring to God, like "My lovingkindness and my fortress, my high tower and my deliverance," had been left out. Ben Gurion, too, when he quoted from the Bible, usually had an eye only for the historic parallel. As General Yadin had said, the Bible was tremendously vivid to the Israeli—but not all of it, not passages telling of the "flesh melting in longing for the living God." Zvi Yehuda Kuk had also quoted the Bible, to explain his father's interpretation of the First Commandment—but present in the Bible of Kuk was something quite unreal to Ben Gurion and to most of us, whether in Israel or anywhere else. Present in the Bible of Zvi Yehuda was that God who somehow did what Ben Gurion claimed he could not do—"talk to man."

* * *

It is still hard to evaluate the implications for Jewish life and history of people who, while living in the Holy Land, speaking Hebrew, and reading the Bible, proclaim that religion is irrelevant. Organizations, a magazine, discussion groups, and changes in ritual might offer the Israeli a kind of religious activity that does not outrage his sense of truth. But behind all the "projects" and "revision" and disputing over terms like Orthodox and Liberal lies the ultimate question: Is it possible for modern man to find something which enables him to argue, as could his forefathers: "Thou art the Supporter, I the falling one, and who should have mercy upon the falling one if not the Supporter"?

But surely that is no less a question for Judaism in America. The daily "realities" of the situation of struggling Israelis and prosperous American Jews are indeed different; but how can we say that the ultimate situation and the ultimate reality that both must face in the end as human beings in the universe are not the same? Perhaps what we are destined to see is a "gathering up of the sparks" in each land, and their sharing together.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

JOE'S MOAN

A Modern Monologue

WILLIAM S. POSTER

WHAT'S a man? I'll tell you! A piece of dirt,
that's what a man is, he's nothing better than
a piece of dirt! Look at these goddam fingers,
bent, swollen, twisted, mangled, like I'd been
catching knucklers; but I'm no Yogi Berra
(though I once had a tryout with the Dodgers),
only a messed-up hatter on Hinsdale Avenue.
Arthritis, that's what the doctors say it is,
I only know it's hell, but they got names,
names and needles, that's where my money goes,
gold, silver, cortisone, anti-histamine,
I got a drugstore full of junk in me
and more holes than a Swiss cheese. A guinea pig,
that's me. And if I squeal, they shake their heads
and tell me, Joe, Joe, go to Arizona,
the only place for you is Arizona.
But what'll I use for money? And what'll I do
in Arizona? Big business with the Indians?
How can I leave this place, the customers
want Joe, Joe with the little mustache, it's me
they come to see, from everywhere they come,
Canarsie, Flatbush, the Bronx, Queens, Manhattan,
even from the South. The hats don't feel right
unless I crease them, flip them, give them the old
Joe Froman treatment. That's my job. Thirty years,
that's how long it is since I sold my first lid,
and every single day, new headaches, heartaches.

WHO would have thought when I was young that I
would end like this, a cripple, fat, ashamed
to walk the streets? Why I was like a bull,
I could do three men's work, raise hell all night
and never feel it, but in this crummy world,
you got to pay for everything, some sooner,
some later, and looks like I pay sooner, hey?
Only the pain, the pain, my God, the pain!

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Christ, I'll do something crazy yet! Sometimes,
when the boys are out, I go up for a hat,
I drag these stinking legs up all those stairs
though every step is like a stab, and when
I get the hat, I'd like to scream aloud,
scream and rip its guts out like I rip my own
before I jam it down somebody's throat.
That's how I feel. Just one step from the bughouse
but everyone thinks I have it easy. Easy!
I got a million socked away in trunks,
that's what they say. I go home every night
and sit on them they think. What they don't know
would fill a library. The old man skimmed
the cream and left me water. Sixty-five,
that's how old he was when mother passed away,
and had to go and take another wife,
a tramp who wasn't fit to shine her shoes,
she lived with him a year and finished him,
took all he had. Till I got her, my uncle
and own brother out of the firm, it cost me
bundles. The lawyers got it, and doctors? Hah!
My kid got sick, my wife's mother, then the wife,
for everything who had to pay but me?
And now I can't pay for myself. But I,
I'll sweat it out somehow, on hands and knees,
if necessary, though it all goes from bad
to worse, I'll stick right here. Easy money!
The government takes it, the landlords grab it,
manufacturers chisel your heart away,
the scale for union men is higher than
you draw yourself, you open up at eight
and close when every lousy working stiff
has hit the sack! A great life! A racket!
The retail business is a bloody buck,
my boy, it gives you nothing solid, no friends,
no life, no love for anything but paying bills.
The times are good, they say, I read about it
in the newspapers, but not on this street, nah,
this section's dying, dying inch by inch,
like a man with cancer, the good ones all
drift out, the scum comes floating in, that's it,
that's what we got here now, scum of the scum,
the dregs of the dregs, you hate to sell to them,
it makes you feel like scum. The other day,
who strolls in but a refugee, get this,
a green one, a Kraut, here two years, married into
a factory and thinks he knows it all.
Maybe, he says, I got a hat to sell,
one like he wore in Germany, *ein gutes Hüttel,*
a Borsalino that never wears out?
A Borsalino! I haven't laid eyes on
a Borsalino since I put on long pants.
Look, Mister, I say, you want a Borsalino,

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a hat that never wears out, suppose I sell
you one, suppose, for argument, I sell
one of them to every customer I got,
what happens next? I sit down here and cut out
paper dolls? Suppose that you sold leather goods
that last forever, where would you get new orders?
It's ideas like yours that ruined Europe,
they don't go over here. This is America
where everything wears out, valises, hats,
clothes, shoes, buildings, automobiles, nothing
lasts or we would all be out of business.
And you and me we wear out, too, or else
our kids would never get a break. You see?

I SOLD the bum two Stetsons but I felt
like hell. That's what I go through now. No trade
that makes you feel it matters if you block
a hat just right. This section's dying, no good
new blood comes in and funny things begin
to happen. Sales go up when they should go down
and down when you get set for up. There's no real slack
and no real season, the customers just don't
behave the way they should, the smartest brains
can't puzzle out the trend. Could be Cold War,
taxes, viruses, maybe TV keeps them indoors
or mixes up the pattern but something's screwy
somewhere. Even the hats don't fit right, sizes
seem to be a little off or people's heads
are shrinking. I wish I knew. It scares me
and I don't scare easy. I've been around
a long time, seen changes of all kinds, but these!
And death, sickness, doctors, drugs, hospitals,
that's all you hear. Remember Larry Kransdorf?
That's right, the jeweler. A nice guy, just my age
and he had plenty. Business and real estate,
jewels, stocks, houses, mortgages. His heart went
in the middle of a sale, he died right there
behind the counter, all the diamonds rolled
across the floor, they didn't hardly know
which to pick up first. His money didn't mean
a goddam thing. And the Spannik boys. Big,
healthy, good-looking kids, thirty and thirty-five,
they lived like lords, the old man left them Apex,
the biggest mill in the state. In six months
they both went. Anemia, leukemia, something
the matter with the blood. And have you heard
about Gordon? Back from Florida, he felt
a little pain. The sun, he said, a trifle
too much sun, but he was through. He barely lived
to sign his will. And so it goes, it goes,
the families go, the big ones first, a man
is just a piece of dirt, a nothing, less
than a nothing and not a goddam thing

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will help, money or looks, position, influence,
doctors, vitamins, Florida or Arizona,
nothing helps because a man is nothing,
the bigger he becomes the more he is
a nothing. Well, that's the way things are around here,
this neighborhood is dying, I can tell,
I am a businessman and can read the signs.
Good God! Somebody at the door. Maybe, today,
I'll break ice early. Looks like a live one.
I'll see you, Jack. Regards to the kids and missus.
Come around! Good morning, sir, good morning.
What can I do you for today? Hah, hah!

IN THIS portrait of a neighborhood hatter, WILLIAM S. POSTER adapts the traditional dramatic monologue, with all its possibilities for ironic revelation, to an examination of the character and life of the small businessman. Mr. Poster, who has published poetry and criticism in *Poetry, Partisan Review,* the *New Republic,* and other periodicals, was born in Brooklyn and attended City College and Columbia. His last appearance in these pages was with "The Day the Bronx Invader Came" (January 1955).

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE TEMPLE AND THE SERVICE

According to Rabbi Nathan

IN THIS season of Tisha B'Av, the solemn period of mourning commemorating the destruction of the First and Second Temples, we present three selections from *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (*'Abot de-Rabbi Natan*). The first describes the sacking of Jerusalem by the Romans, the second is a commentary on the meaning of the Temple service, and the third suggests acts of lovingkindness may be as effective an atonement as the Temple service.

These selections are from the text translated by Dr. Judah Goldin of the Jewish Theological Seminary, and published (1955) by the Yale University Press in the Yale Judaica Series. *"The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan,"* Dr. Goldin writes in his introduction, "is one of the so-called extracanonical Minor Tractates of the Talmud. Briefly it may be described as a commentary and amplification of the renowned mishnaic tractate . . . called *'Abot (Fathers)* or *Pirke 'Abot (Chapters of the Fathers)*. . . .

"Nothing can be said with certainty about the identity of the 'Nathan' in the title . . . or about the exact nature of his relation to this work. . . . The most plausible suggestion [is] that the *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* is based on a recension of *Chapters of the Fathers* by the Babylonian Rabbi Nathan who was an older contemporary of Judah the Prince. There is still the possibility, however, that our Rabbi Nathan is an otherwise unknown sage who is responsible for [the present work] itself rather than for the alternative *Chapters of the Fathers* on which it is based."

NOW, when Vespasian came to destroy Jerusalem he said to the inhabitants: "Fools, why do you seek to destroy this city and why do you seek to burn the Temple? For what do I ask of you but that you send me one bow or one arrow, and I shall go off from you?"

They said to him: "Even as we went forth against the first two who were here before thee and slew them, so shall we go forth against thee and slay thee."

When Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai heard this, he sent for the men of Jerusalem and said to them: "My children, why do you destroy this city and why do you seek to burn the Temple? For what is it that he asks of you? Verily he asks naught of you save one bow or one arrow, and he will go off from you."

They said to him: "Even as we went forth against the two before him and slew them, so shall we go forth against him and slay him."

Vespasian had men stationed inside the walls of Jerusalem. Every word which they overheard they would write down, attach (the message) to an arrow, and shoot it over the wall, saying that Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai was one of the Emperor's friends.

Now, after Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai had spoken to them one day, two and three days, and they still would not attend to him, he sent for his disciples, for Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Joshua.

"My sons," he said to them, "arise and take me out of here. Make a coffin for me that I might lie in it."

Rabbi Eliezer took hold of the head end of it, Rabbi Joshua took hold of the foot; and they began carrying him as the sun set, until they reached the gates of Jerusalem.

"Who is this?" the gatekeepers demanded.

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"It's a dead man," they replied. "Do you not know that the dead may not be held overnight in Jerusalem?"

"If it's a dead man," the gatekeepers said to them, "take him out."

So they took him out and continued carrying him until they reached Vespasian. They opened the coffin and Rabban Johanan stood up before him.

"Art thou Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai?" Vespasian inquired; "tell me, what may I give thee?"

"I ask naught of thee," Rabban Johanan replied, "save Jamnia, where I might go and teach my disciples and there establish a prayer [house] and perform all the commandments."

"Go," Vespasian said to him, "and whatever thou wishest to do, do."

Said Rabban Johanan to him: "By thy leave, may I say something to thee?"

"Speak," Vespasian said to him.

Said Rabban Johanan to him: "Lo, thou art about to be appointed king."

"How dost thou know this?" Vespasian asked.

Rabban Johanan replied: "This has been handed down to us, that the Temple will not be surrendered to a commoner, but to a king; as it is said, *And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one*" (Isa. 10-34).

It was said: No more than a day, or two or three days, passed before messengers reached him from his city (announcing) that the emperor was dead and that he had been elected to succeed as king.

A catapult was brought to him, drawn up against the wall of Jerusalem. Boards of cedar were brought to him which he set into the catapult, and with these he struck against the wall until he made a breach in it. A swine's head was brought and set into the catapult, and this he hurled toward the (sacrificial) limbs which were on the altar.

It was then that Jerusalem was captured.

Meanwhile Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai sat and waited trembling, the way Eli had sat and waited; as it is said, *Lo, Eli sat upon his seat by the wayside watching; for his heart trembled for the ark of God* (I Sam. 4:13). When Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai heard that Jerusalem was destroyed and the Temple was up in flames, he tore his clothing, and his disciples tore their clothing, and they wept, crying aloud and mourning.

ON THE Temple service: how so? So long as the Temple service is maintained, the world is a blessing to its inhabitants and the rains come down in season, as it is said, *To Love the Lord your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give the rain of your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain . . . and I will give grass in thy fields for thy cattle* (Deut. 11: 13-15). But when the Temple service is not maintained, the world is not a blessing to its inhabitants and the rains do not come down in season, as it is said, *Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived . . . and He shut up the heaven, so that there shall be no rain* (Deut. 11:16-17).

And so, too, it says, *I pray you, consider from this day and forward—before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord, through all that time, when one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty press-measures, there were but twenty* (Hag. 2: 15-16).

Why is it not said of the wine vat, *"Twenty measures, there were but ten,"* as it is said of the wheat, *Twenty measures* (etc.)? Because the (yield of the) wine vat is a better sign (of the year's fortune) than wheat. This is to teach thee that whenever wine suffers it is a bad sign for the remainder of the year.

Said Israel to the Holy One, blessed be He: "Master of the Universe, why didst Thou do this to us?"

The Holy Spirit replied: *"Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little . . . because of My house that lieth waste, while ye run every man for his own house* (Hag. 1:9). But if you will busy yourselves with the service of the Temple, I shall bless you as in the beginning; as it is said, *Consider, I pray you . . . from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid. . . . Is the seed yet in the barn? Yea, the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree hath not brought forth —from this day will I bless you"* (Hag. 2:18-19).

Thus thou dost learn that there is no

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service more beloved of the Holy One, blessed be He, than the Temple service.

On Acts of Loving-Kindness: how so? Lo, it says, *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice* (Hos. 6:6). From the very first the world was created only with mercy, as it is said, *For I have said, the world is built with mercy; in the very heavens Thou dost establish Thy faithfulness* (Ps. 89:3).

Once as Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai was coming forth from Jerusalem, Rabbi Joshua followed after him and beheld the Temple in ruins.

"Woe unto us!" Rabbi Joshua cried, "that this, the place where the iniquities of Israel were atoned for, is laid waste!"

"My son," Rabban Johanan said to him, "be not grieved; we have another atonement as effective as this. And what is it? It is acts of loving-kindness, as it is said, *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice*" (Hos. 6:6).

For thus we find concerning Daniel, that greatly beloved man, that he was engaged in acts of loving-kindness [all his days. For it is said of him, *Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee* (Dan. 6:17)].

Now, what were the acts of loving-kindness in which Daniel was engaged? Canst thou say that he offered burnt offerings and sacrifices in Babylon? Verily it had been said, *Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest; but in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes, there shalt thou offer thy burnt offerings* (Deut. 12: 13-14). What then were the acts of loving-kindness in which he was engaged? He used to outfit the bride and make her rejoice, accompany the dead, give a perutah to the poor, and pray three times a day—and his prayer was received with favor; as it is said, *And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house—now his windows were open in his upper chamber toward Jerusalem—and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God . . .* (Dan. 6:11).

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ON THE HORIZON

DR. FLESCH'S CURE FOR READING TROUBLES

A Cool Look at the Panacea

SPENCER BROWN

"The spirit killeth; the letter giveth life."

TROUBLES in teaching children to read are no new thing. In an early 16th-century morality play, John Redford's *Wyt and Science,* there is a delightful scene, unfortunately too long and a bit too coarse to quote here, in which Idlenesse tries to teach Ingnorance his name. Idlenesse uses the combination of letter and syllabic methods apparently then in favor. With considerable ingenuity and vituperation she leads Ingnorance through the sounds and syllables, telling him to hiss like a goose for the sound *s,* and so forth. She finally gets him to "put together," on the third or fourth try, and he says his name, sound by sound, almost correctly. Then—

IDLE.: How sayst, now, fool? Is not there thy name?
INGN.: Yea.
IDLE.: Well than; can me now that same! What hast thow lernd?
INGN.: Ich cannot tell.

In those good old days, whenever a child said, "Ich cannot tell," he was quietly left behind as a dull lout, incapable of letters. Four centuries later, "Ich cannot tell" is intolerable to all ears. When uttered by any significant number of children, it gives rise to such violent excitement as is now being abetted by Dr. Rudolf Flesch, whose *Why Johnny Can't Read and What You Can Do About It* is near the top of the current non-fiction best-seller list.

For such popularity there are at least two reasons, both evident in the title. It noisily attacks American schools and assumes their total failure, thus falling into the category of Weapons for the Great Educational War that everybody likes to engage in. And its unqualified assurance that you can teach, or re-teach, your own child to read, makes it the craftiest of do-it-yourself books, with an unlimited and self-reproducing market.

DR. FLESCH himself sets up the criteria by which he wishes us to judge him and his book:

> Why should you take me seriously? I'll tell you why. Because all those professors are experts in reading, supposedly, but not experts in either of the two sciences that really deal with reading. . . . There are only two kinds of experts worth listening to when it comes to reading: linguists and psychologists.

Born and trained as a lawyer in Vienna, Dr. Flesch came to the United States in 1938. Beginning all over, in a swift academic

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MODERN, or "progressive," elementary school education has come under serious and skeptical scrutiny in recent years, perhaps most vociferously on the ground that children are no longer taught properly how to read and write. Here SPENCER BROWN, who teaches English at the Fieldston School in New York City, examines a current attack on the methods of teaching reading, Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read* (Harper, 222 pp., $3.00). Mr. Brown's last article for us was "Strange Doings at 'Animal Farm'" (February 1955).

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career he took a bachelor's degree in library science, a master's in adult education, and finally, in 1943, a Ph.D. in educational research. His doctoral dissertation developed a formula for judging "readability" of writing. This study, popularized in his books *The Art of Plain Talk* and *The Art of Readable Writing*, has won him positions as "readability consultant" for corporations and government agencies.

Why Johnny Can't Read is thus ostensibly the work of a scientist—either linguist or psychologist or both—on a problem of consuming interest. The thesis is simple and is stated in language that, for a scientist, is startlingly simple:

> What I found is absolutely fantastic. The teaching of reading—all over the United States, in all the schools, in all the textbooks—is totally wrong and flies in the face of all logic and common sense. . . .
>
> You know that I was born and raised in Austria. Do you know that there are no remedial cases in Austrian schools? Do you know that there are no remedial cases in Germany, in France, in Italy, in Norway, in Spain—practically anywhere in the world except in the United States? Do you know that the teaching of reading never was a problem anywhere in the world until the United States switched to the present method around about 1925?
>
> This sounds incredible, but it is true.

The old method, which Dr. Flesch thus asserts was universal until 1925 in the United States, was to teach the child (in any alphabetical language) the sounds of the letters and then to show him how to put those sounds and letters together in words for reading and writing and spelling. This phonetic (or phonic) system of instruction is the basis for the second half of the book, which is nothing but lists of letters, sounds, and words that every parent is encouraged to teach or re-teach his child.

The new method, the root of all the present evil, is variously called the word, or the sight-word, or the see-and-say method; it teaches children to read by recognition of whole words and repetition to assure their retention. This system, according to Dr. Flesch, is now universal in American education. Besides disapproving of it on the *a priori* ground that English has a phonetic (or nearly phonetic) alphabet, he holds the new method solely responsible for the disastrously high incidence of non-readers or "remedial cases" (children who have to be re-trained by expensive and intensive individual work with remedial experts). The problems of "reversals," "reading readiness," and emotional adjustment Dr. Flesch dismisses with a laugh. Furthermore, the word method is responsible for the fact that almost nobody learns to read any more (if a child does learn to read, he picks it up by osmosis or from his parents) and nobody can spell.

> The educators, of course, deny that anything has happened. They trot out all sorts of data and statistics to show that American children read, write, and spell much better than they used to. I am not going to disprove those data one by one. What I am talking about here are [*sic*] not matters for argument but facts—facts that are public knowledge. The American people know what they know.

One would expect that educational research would have tried to test one method against the other. Dr. Flesch reviews nearly a dozen such experiments which more or less strongly indicate that the phonics method is superior. Then:

> After all this, you possibly expect me now to recite the evidence *in favor* of the word method. But, as I said at the beginning of this chapter, there is none. The story as I told it here is complete; this is the sum total of all experiments ever made. I have left out nothing and misrepresented nothing—to the best of my ability as a researcher.

To make absolute assertions with such trifling proof and then challenge the ignorant or lay audience to make an offhand disproof of them smacks of the pitchman rather than of the scientist. We do not have to go outside Dr. Flesch's own book for disproof of his sweeping statements. His assertion that the word method prevails "all over the United States, in all the schools, in all the textbooks" appears on page 2. On page 8 appears a description of present-day teaching of phonics in Cleveland Catholic schools. On pages 100-109 there is a folksy story of Dr. Flesch's visit to two phonic-based school

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systems in and near Chicago. On page 10 he praises the Hay-Wingo textbook *Reading with Phonics,* "the only primer on the market today that is based firmly on the alphabet-phonic principle." The only *other* book of that type, the Hegge-Kirk drills, is commended on page 115.

DR. FLESCH might of course say that he is only heating it up a little, that his universal is *almost* true, that a good journalist always colors and exaggerates for emphasis. Precisely. Dr. Flesch is unfortunately a good journalist. But by his own ukase only a scientist has the right to speak on reading.

"The teaching of reading was never a problem until . . . 1925." Let us forget any historical data on men who were "slow at letters"; let us forget Leonardo da Vinci and his mirror-writing; let us forget even the "Ich cannot tell" of Ingnorance. Let us turn to Dr. Flesch. Here we learn that Noah Webster, with his famous *Blue-Backed Speller* (1783), "was the first man who realized that an English primer has to be based on phonetics." Webster, according to Dr. Flesch, held sway for a century, and presumably all was light and phonetics. But Horace Mann "observed the teaching of phonics in Prussia and recommended it enthusiastically for use in American schools." Why did Mann have to recommend it? His remarks on the Prussian schools (Dr. Flesch gives no source) probably come from his *Seventh Annual Report* (1843), sixty years after the *Blue-Backed Speller* had returned America for the next century to the high road of phonics from which America had never departed and back to which Horace Mann was urging a return.

At the end of Dr. Flesch's account of one of the good (i.e., phonics) schools (which do not exist), he says, "Either that was a miracle or every word in this book is true." A difficult choice.

Nor will his statement about the total lack of experimental evidence in favor of the word method ("This is the sum total of all experiments ever made. I have left out nothing and misrepresented nothing") add lustre to his reputation as a researcher. For Dr. Flesch has left out some things and misrepresented many. Oddly enough, he has left out one experiment that would favor phonics (Tiffin and McKinnis, *School and Society,* LI, Feb. 10, 1940, 190-92). He has also left out an experiment decidedly unfavorable to phonics (Burt and Lewis, *British Journal of Educational Psychology,* XVI, Nov. 1946, 116-32), and he has left out Burrows' summary of previous research concluding that phonics is not effective in isolation or as a sole approach to beginning reading (Burrows, *Reading Teacher,* VI, May 1953, 12-17). Perhaps he thinks he has covered this last, however, by an earlier condemnation of Burrows as "violently anti-phonics."

As for misrepresentation: Dr. Flesch correctly reports *part* of the Garrison and Heard experiment as showing that phonics-trained children spell better. He omits the finding that children with no phonics training make smoother and better oral readers in the lower grades and seem to lose less during vacations than do children with phonics training.

Dr. Flesch is more daring with the experiment of Harry L. Tate (*Elementary School Journal,* XXXVII, June 1937, 752-63; Dr. Flesch's reference says "July 1937.") He quotes Dr. Tate's conclusion: "Phonetics instruction and drill, as judged by the results of the Gates Primary Reading Test, Type 1, is far superior to the look-and-say method in developing the ability to recognize words." What could be more conclusive? But this is only the first part of a long conclusion. Let us continue where Dr. Flesch leaves off:

> (2) The results of Type 2 of the Gates test give a slight indication that the look-and-say method is superior to phonics instruction and drill in developing the ability to comprehend sentences. (3) Results obtained from Type 3 of the test show conclusively that the look-and-say method is superior to phonics instruction and drill in developing the ability to comprehend paragraphs of directions. (4) The use of as many as thirty minutes daily for special phonics instruction and drill leads to an unbalanced development of the abilities to comprehend words, to understand sentences, and to grasp the meaning of paragraphs.

Other deductions that do not rest directly

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on the data and therefore do not have the weight of conclusions are, in the opinion of the investigator, justified. These inferences are: (1) Regular periods for phonics instruction and drill are not desirable. (2) Phonics should be used by the pupil as a tool and not as subject matter to be mastered for its own sake. (3) Overemphasis on phonics hinders rapidity and thoroughness of comprehension.

Since it is well known that phonics-trained readers are likely to slow down to sound the words (v. Tate, p. 762), it is possible that Dr. Flesch did not have time to finish reading the article.

LEAVING Dr. Flesch for a moment, let us look at facts as they are generally accepted by recognized authorities in the fields of reading and remedial training:

1. Reading difficulty or disability is not new. It is, however, a new *problem,* because nowadays everyone is expected to read. In the good old days the non-reader simply remained a non-reader.

2. Nor is it an American problem alone. Miss Anna Gillingham, nationally known remedial expert, says that to her personal knowledge there are many remedial cases in England, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, as well as in the United States.

3. It is not true that only one method of teaching reading prevailed until our times. A variety of methods was used, syllabic, repetitive, or alphabetic.

4. According to Dr. Arthur E. Traxler, executive secretary of the Educational Records Bureau, the indications from educational research and testing are that we are now doing as good a job on reading as we did thirty years ago—with the important proviso that we are now doing it with many more children.

5. About 85 per cent of our children learn to read rapidly and well by the word method, or a combination of the word method with incidental phonics.

6. The remaining 15 per cent of our children, if trained by the word method, would be remedial cases. They can be trained, or re-trained, by an alphabetic-phonetic approach, by tracing letters (the method of the late Dr. Grace Fernald), by re-training right-handers to be the left-handers they should have been all along (following the research of the late Dr. Samuel Orton), or by a combination of these and other methods.

7. Reading difficulty can be predicted before the child begins learning to read and can in large measure be prevented by suitable training.

8. Reading difficulty has very little if any relation to intelligence or lack of it.

9. Though some authorities like Orton, Fernald, and Miss Gillingham appear to advocate a single method for teaching reading or for remedial work, many authorities and teachers agree that no one method is a panacea; the good teacher must be flexible enough to use whichever is appropriate, and a combination of several may be the right answer.

10. Many cases of reading disability are accompanied by grave problems in emotional adjustment. These problems may often be the result of the reading problem; in many cases, however, the emotional problems come first and may be the cause.

11. An overwhelming amount of clinical and experimental evidence has been amassed to show a clear though not universal relation between "confused dominance" (and similar neurological handicaps) and reading, spelling, and even speech difficulties.

This last requires some explanation. "Dominance" means left- or right-handedness, eyedness, or even footedness (left-footed kickers are in demand as left wings on soccer teams). Sometimes a left-eyed person is right-handed; sometimes a person cannot decide which he is (ambidexterity); sometimes, since in our culture left-handedness is a handicap everywhere except among first basemen and outfielders, the southpaw is subjected to mistaken re-training. These and similar cases are instances of confused dominance. The child reads from left to right at one time and right to left at others. All children do this when they begin, but the switch-hitters do it longer, oftener, and worse.

All this knowledge, which I hope I have

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not grossly oversimplified, is ridiculed by Dr. Flesch in his capacity as psychologist.

The psychologist—and teacher—is also concerned with the question of repetition. Now the great defense of the word method is that it deals with whole words, that the child sees progress in unatomized learning. But a word to be learned must be repeated over and over. Hence the books for children learning by this method are full of repetition which is the butt of Dr. Flesch's best scorn. He brands as "stuff and guff" phrases like, "Come, come, look, look!" and other exclamations of delight or dismay in the first readers. Dr. Flesch assumes—wrongly—that children hate the nasty little books and all their lives will hate reading.

But it all depends on whose ox is repetitively gored. Elsewhere Dr. Flesch quotes with approval a pro-phonics English educator: "Repetition bores us; so we say it bores the child. As a matter of fact, he loves it."

A psychologist would try to discover whether repetition was fun for children or not. But Dr. Flesch knows already. The repetition involved in phonics is fun. Other repetition is stuff and guff, the wicked stepmother of non-learning.

Let us examine Dr. Flesch in his capacity as linguist—which he demonstrates chiefly by a passionate interest in spelling. He is as indignant at Americans' inability to spell as at their inability to read. Here he may have something. But though from my experience in teaching and in reading College Board examinations I know students spell badly, they spell no worse than they did twenty-five years ago, when they all were allegedly trained by phonics. They make the same mistakes, too: indeed, lists of words most frequently misspelled have changed very little in seventy-five years. I also know that many adults of all ages spell badly, that some students spell perfectly while others with the same training spell badly, and that ability to spell seems to have almost no relation to ability to read. Perhaps the one constant factor, the caprice and unpredictability of English spelling, is largely responsible.

In any case, many students misspell, some of them frequently. Here is Dr. Flesch's explanation of bad spelling!

> Why do they write "definate," "grammer," and "miricle," although their eyes have looked at *definite, grammar,* and *miracle* millions of times?
>
> They do because their whole-word training makes a tremendous difference in their mental habits. Anyone who has started phonics in first grade goes through life reading every single word he reads letter by letter. He does this fantastically fast, and quite unconsciously, but nevertheless he does it. Every time he reads *miracle,* he *sees* the *a;* every time he reads *definite,* he *sees* the second *i.* No wonder he knows how to spell these words.

Let us assume for a moment that Dr. Flesch is correct. Then let him explain how sophisticated readers and good spellers could read

PARIS IN THE
THE SPRING

as "Paris in the spring." This and similar twisters, you recall, were going the rounds a year ago. Nine out of ten people would make sense by misreading the words. Why? Dr. Flesch happens to be wrong.* One great defect of the phonic method of teaching is that it is hard for phonically trained people to get over the habit of reading every letter; some of them remain lip-readers; the best of them get over it somehow. Good readers do not read every letter "fantastically fast"; they skim over letters and take in whole words and whole phrases.

Some skilled readers, however, do occasionally read every letter—these are proofreaders, or English teachers. If Dr. Flesch were right, one could read proof as fast as he reads anything else. The ordinary good reader does not waste time looking for errors and often does not see them when they occur. He is interested in reading as fast as he can read with understanding. Nowhere in his book does Dr. Flesch mention the known fact that the fast reader is the good reader.

Dr. Flesch is quite mistaken in alleging

*Even on the subject of reading music, on which so much research remains to be done, Dr. Flesch knows the answer—note by note (p. 118).

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the phonic-trained reader's ability to sound any word correctly the first time he sees it. His own name, to an American ignorant of German, might sound as Flesh, Flesk (*sch* as in *school*), Fless (*sch* as in *schism*), or Flestch (*sch* as in *eschew*). And how does the skilled reader sound *slough* when he first sees it? Will he change the pronunciation according to sense and locality? If this is a deliberately unfair example, how about *danger* and *hanger* and *anger* and *tangerine*? You can go on by yourself.

Dr. Flesch is magnificently wrong when he asks,

> Are you a surefooted phonetic speller? Here are a few words in phonetic transcription. Would you know how to spell them?
>
> *baz*-ight
> alt*rish*-l
> rayzh-n
> *prig*-ess
> perry-*klayzha*
> unshl
>
> Are you sure you would automatically spell these words *bazzite, altricial, rasion, priggess, periclasia,* and *uncial*? Or could you too use a little phonics?

The only sane reply would be this: no, I could not automatically spell these words correctly. Since all but *priggess,* which could be guessed, are unfamiliar to most readers, only a fool would fail to look the words up. Every one but *priggess* could be spelled at least two ways: *bazzite* is more likely to be *bazite* and, being obviously an importation, might be *baseidt*; it is also pronounced *batsight,* which opens up other pleasing possibilities. And so with all the rest. Dr. Flesch, too, could use a little phonics. Fizzition, heal thyself.

ONE way in which we can judge the integrity of a book is to listen to its tone. *Why Johnny Can't Read* has the tone of the little books that scream about a nationwide conspiracy to deny the existence of flying saucers. If we will step right up and buy a flying saucer, all our problems will be solved.

It is idle to speculate about motives. But it is not hard to gauge the effect of Dr. Flesch's book on anxious minds. For the parents to whom Dr. Flesch addresses himself have one thing in common—their anxiety. And he promises to cure it quickly, easily, and infallibly:

> Take him fully into your confidence and explain to him exactly what you are trying to do. Tell him that you are going to do something new with him—something entirely different from what his teachers did in school. Tell him that this is *certain* [Dr. Flesch's usual italics] to work. Convince him that as soon as he has taken this medicine he will be cured.

This, I think, is the most unconscionable passage in the book. No skillful remedial teacher will make such a promise: he will promise only alleviation, not cure. And here the teaching will be done by the unpracticed parent, whose relations with the child—as far as reading goes—are already for the most part difficult and hesitant. Further, a conflict between parent and teacher, at a time when the child needs confidence in both, cannot but aggravate his emotional disturbance, whether it has resulted from or caused his reading disability. True, in the hands of some well-balanced parents who happen to be good teachers and whose child happens to have a disability readily curable by phonics and happens to be emotionally sturdy, Dr. Flesch's book may not do much harm. But this is a book that promises a sure-fire solution for all reading ills. We can only be grateful that Dr. Flesch has not yet written a book urging every parent to brew his own polio vaccine.

Why are the parents anxious? Some of their children (perhaps 15 per cent) are reading disability cases, and many of them are not yet properly taken care of—especially in overcrowded public schools or in any very conventional school. Vast numbers of children, too, are learning to read at a later age or grade than their parents did. (The children will catch up, however.) Thus the parent fears the child will never learn; and when Dr. Flesch snorts at the concept of "reading readiness" and advocates teaching the child at five before the school ruins him, the parent is convinced, especially as he is constantly hearing, from writers like Albert

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Lynd and Mortimer Smith and Robert Hutchins and Bernard Iddings Bell, that the schools (along with, of course, everything else) are going to the dogs.

In any case, Dr. Flesch will succeed not only in exacerbating distrust between school and home but in diverting the energies of the school toward self-defense and away from its proper business.

The skill of reading and writing is enormously complex. It is actually an art, and we do not yet fully understand how it is learned. Yet of all arts of comparable complexity it is the only one we require of everybody. Some educators, realizing the child's difficulties in learning to read, have asked why we expect everybody to learn. Do we expect everybody to learn to play the violin?

In our culture this is of course an idle question and a false analogy. But it is as ignorant to assert that any particular method of learning to read is *easy for everybody* as it is silly to deny the necessity of learning.

It is a pity that the answers are not easy. It is also a pity that, when anxious people do seek an easy answer, there is always some one to exploit and increase their anxiety.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Tolerance and Anti-Communism

NATHAN GLAZER

TEN or twenty years ago, no one could have predicted that the defense of civil liberties would become the complicated problem it is today. A generation raised on campaigns for the defense of the civil liberties of socialists, pacifists, anarchists, and an outspoken or queer teacher here or there encountered no perplexities to trouble and confuse its mind about defending dissidents. It could even extend its protection to the odd crackpot who supported the Nazis and the fascists; there were too few of them to make a difference.

But now the matter has become more difficult and complex. There is no question that Communism, few as the actual party members may have been at any time, had a far greater influence on American intellectual and cultural life, and in American government, too, than anything that can be legitimately called Nazism or fascism. And there is no question that the American people in general feel more intensely about Communists than they felt about Nazism and fascism. So, since the threat was greater, and the popular antagonism more intense, and, since, too, we live in a democratic country, the last ten years have seen the creation of a whole system of law, administrative regulations, regulative bodies, and private agencies devoted, at one extreme, to putting Communists in jail, and at the other to making life difficult for people who might have been or might now be Communists.

In the resulting hullabaloo and confusion, many people have grown concerned about the erosion or abrogation of the civil liberties of non-Communists as well as Communists; other people have been concerned about the extent of the Communist threat, and whether the counter-measures constitute a really effective defense against it. At such moments we have learned to expect the great foundations to take a hand in the public debate: to appoint objective and qualified authorities to review the issue, and to come forth with proposals and recommendations. The Ford Foundation's Fund for the Republic, which devotes itself to the defense of civil liberties, has fulfilled this expectation in sponsoring the recently published *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties,* by Samuel A. Stouffer. What, then, has a leading sociologist working with the resources of a great foundation to tell us about the American people and civil liberties today?

To begin with, we should understand that Professor Stouffer's work deals only with one part of the problem. It is a survey of *opinions,* in effect a public opinion poll, conducted by the best qualified agencies and guided by the best authorities, on what the American people think about Communism and civil liberties. From any survey of opinions we find out what people *think.* In this book, we find out what the American people think about allowing advocates of public ownership of industry, opponents of religion, suspected Communists, and

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ARE sociologists, with their current predilection for opinion-polling techniques, in danger of mistaking what people think for what *is*? With this question in mind, NATHAN GLAZER examines Samuel A. Stouffer's *Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties* (Doubleday, 278 pp., $4.00) and offers his own appraisal of tolerance in contemporary America, with special reference to the problem of anti-Communism. Mr. Glazer is a frequent contributor to our pages, and is co-author (with David Riesman and Reuel Denney) of *The Lonely Crowd.*

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admitted Communists to speak, publish, teach, hold government jobs, and so on. To a much smaller and less adequate extent, we find out how serious they consider the danger posed by domestic Communists to be. We do not find out whether, *in fact,* the civil liberties of advocates of public ownership, atheists, and Communists have been infringed, whether they should be limited, how the present situation in this respect compares with the past, and whether it is likely to deteriorate or improve in the future.

But, obviously, what people think about Communism, and what they think ought to be done about it, is itself one of the most important facts in the situation. If public opinion is indifferent, then government leaders may safely do little or nothing; if it is enlightened, they may take whatever measures they deem wise to meet the Communist threat; if public opinion is violently aroused but ill informed, then legislators and officials may have to take measures which thy feel are unwise, or the braver ones may have to undertake the difficult job of educating public opinion. So, despite the necessary limitations of the polling technique, much of value can be uncovered by a survey of what people think.

LET us turn now to the study. Two organizations—Gallup's American Institute of Public Opinion and the National Opinion Research Center—conducted the interviewing, using the same questionnaire, and drawing samples of roughly the same size—2,400 persons in each —so that they could check their results against each other. (In most cases the differences were minor.)

In addition to this national sample of 4,800 cases, a second sample of community leaders was studied by the two organizations. Towns of more than 10,000 but less than 150,000 were selected at random, and fourteen of their leading citizens were interviewed — political leaders, business and civic leaders, labor leaders, and heads of major voluntary organizations; they were asked the same questions that were put to the national sample. Some 1,500 community leaders were interviewed, and it thus became possible to compare people of position and substance in the middle-sized cities of the country with the rest of the people of those cities, and with the country as a whole.

This was the most interesting feature of the design of the study. The general finding that the community leaders are more tolerant than the ordinary run of people will come as no surprise to readers of public opinion polls, who have long known that the educated take civil liberties more seriously than the rest of the country does. The fact, however, that even commanders of American Legion posts and regents of the DAR are far more liberal than the American people in general, is a surprise. But this would seem to be a reflection less of a responsible concern for civil liberties on the part of the American Legion and the DAR than of the fact that the American populace is so woefully indifferent to the ordinary requirements of democracy.

Let me cite a few findings that support this generalization. "If a person wanted to make a speech in your community favoring government ownership of the railroads and the big industries," one question runs, "should he be allowed to speak, or not?" Fifty-eight per cent of the national cross-section would permit him to speak (three out of ten people in the country would not!), while 81 per cent of the community leaders would. Seventy-six per cent of the American Legion post commanders, and 75 per cent of the DAR regents would permit him to speak—a considerably higher percentage than in the country as a whole. A majority of the people, and almost half the community leaders (47 per cent) would be against allowing the advocate of public ownership to teach in a college or university.

Everyone was harsher on "a person who wanted to make a speech aganist church and religion." A heavy majority of the national cross-section (60 per cent) would not allow him to speak, and a third of the community leaders took the same position. Seven-tenths of the community leaders would not allow an opponent of churches and religion to teach in a college and university. Relatively small minorities (one-fifth of the national sample, one-tenth of the leaders sample) would not permit a speech to be made by a man "whose loyalty had been questioned before a Congressional committee, but who swore under oath he had never been a Communist." The admitted Communist, naturally, fares worst. A bare majority of the community leaders would permit him to speak, and would not remove his book from the library shelf. It is rather startling to read that 68 per cent of the national sample think he should be fired if he is a clerk in a store—and a bare majority of community leaders

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also think so. Indeed, when asked, "Should an admitted Communist be put in jail?" 51 per cent of the national cross-section and 27 per cent of the community leaders say yes. Communists fare better at the hands of even the Department of Justice, it seems, than they would if the majority of the people of this country had their way.

Certainly the people of the United States are not overly concerned about protecting the rights of those with whom they disagree. If it is any consolation, they have held such attitudes for a long time. The "level of tolerance"—if we measure it by what people say—has never been high. ". . . Even in 1943, after the battle of Stalingrad, two out of five Americans would have prohibited any Communist party member from speaking on the radio. By 1948 this proportion was up to 57 per cent; by 1952 it had risen to 77 per cent; and in . . . January 1954 the figure was 81 per cent . . . an NORC survey before the war found 25 per cent who would deny socialists the right to publish newspapers; by 1953 [this figure had risen to] 45 per cent."

By contrast with the American people as a whole, the community leaders stand forth as bulwarks and champions of civil liberties.

BEFORE apprehending the extinction of the last remnants of liberty on these shores, however, we should remind ourselves that this is a study of opinions and not realities; that socialists, atheists, and even Communists regularly publish newspapers and make speeches, and that individuals in the first two of these categories teach and work for the government and for colleges and even school boards without major disturbances, despite the "will of the American people"; in short, that liberty is not to be measured, or at least not solely, by the opinions of a random sampling of people the great majority of whom have never thought about or considered the questions with which they are confronted; and that legislatures and courts and constitutions and our customary procedures are surer defenses of liberty than the off-the-cuff feelings of the man on the street. It seems, indeed, that it is almost in an absent-minded or abstracted way that the average American will propose these drastic measures for Communists. Most people just don't seem to be terribly concerned about domestic Communism—or any political issue. When asked, "Do you happen to know the names of any Senators and Congressmen who have been taking a leading part in these investigations of Communism?" 30 per cent of the national cross-section "could not come up with a single correct name—not even the name of Senator McCarthy!" And this was during the televised Senate investigation of the fight between Senator McCarthy and the army.

And yet we cannot be indifferent to the fact that most people will accept the penalizing of opinion and speech with hardly a qualm; we should like to know more about just why they hold such benighted opinions and what, if anything, can be done about it. Professor Stouffer's work offers some help. To begin with, it helps us to identify those elements in the population which are strongest in their feeling for liberty, and those which are most indifferent, or most actively opposed to it for certain groups. (Rather than deal with many questions on many specific issues, Dr. Stouffer combines fifteen questions to form a "scale of tolerance," and then examines the distribution to tolerance in the population.)

If we arbitrarily fix on a certain score in the scale of tolerance and call those achieving this score the "more tolerant"—31 per cent of the national sample fall into this category—we find that:

47 per cent of those aged 21-29 are "more tolerant"

66 per cent of college graduates are "more tolerant"

48 per cent of the people who live in the West are "more tolerant"

39 per cent of the people who live in metropolitan areas are "more tolerant."

The concentrations of the "less tolerant" are to be found among the old, the poorly educated, Southerners, and small-town dwellers and farmers.*

*One should not be misled by the term "more tolerant." It would perhaps be better to call these people "less intolerant." One can be against allowing a Communist or an opponent of religion to speak publicly, and still be classed among the "more tolerant." The "less tolerant" are those who would favor sanctions against someone who had only been *accused* of being a Communist! (Even Senator McCarthy would undoubtedly bob up at the "tolerant" end of the scale, so generous must one be in defining tolerance in America if one is to get a large enough sample of the "tolerant" to study successfully.)

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Of course, all these factors—and some lesser ones in determining tolerance—may be interrelated. The young tend to be better educated than the old, the people who live in big cities tend to be better educated than those in small towns, a higher proportion of Westerners than of Southerners live in big cities, etc. What is it, then, that makes a man more tolerant when two or more of these factors come together, as they often do? One wishes that the author had done more to determine which of these factors was "more important," but even without his help it seems possible to say that education is by far the most important.

THERE are two indications of its importance which we can glean from the data. For one thing, if you take all those between the ages of twenty-one and sixty who are high school graduates or of lesser education—and this forms a huge block of the population—you find that age seems to have no effect on tolerance while quantity of education is decisive. Thus, in this group, roughly 20 per cent of those with only grade school education, roughly 30 per cent of those with some high school education, and close to 45 per cent of the high school graduates, are "more tolerant" — regardless of the ages in these educational categories. Our second indication is provided by the South, which is far less tolerant as a whole than the other regions of the country; thus only 16 per cent of the South is rated "more tolerant" as against 32 per cent of the Midwest, 39 per cent of the East, and 48 per cent of the West. But these very large differences are reduced to much smaller ones if one compares *educated* Southerners with educated people from other regions. Of college graduates in metropolitan areas, 62 per cent of Southerners are among the "more tolerant," compared (for the same category) with 64 per cent of the Middle West, 78 per cent of the East, and 73 per cent of the West. Pretty much the same story is told when we compare those with "some college." It is only when we get to those with a high school education or less that we find the great gap between the South and the rest of the country.

Education is perhaps most closely related to what is generally called "socio-economic status" or class, and which, in most public opinion studies, appears in the form of occupation. It would be interesting, in particular, to know where workers stand on this question of tolerance, and it would be interesting, too, to know where businessmen and professional people fall. Unfortunately, there is surprisingly little data reported directly on this point — though we do learn in passing that men in the professions and semi-professions include the same proportion of the "tolerant" as college graduates. One would guess that workers are roughly as intolerant as those with high school educations or less. (It is interesting, though not revealing for this point, that labor union leaders are no more tolerant than presidents of Chambers of Commerce.)

BUT once having mapped out the areas of tolerance and intolerance—and I think the map as presented by Dr. Stouffer is roughly correct—we come to the really difficult questions that must precede any sort of deeper understanding. What does it mean to say that the less educated, the people in rural areas, the Southerners, and the old people are less tolerant? If we were to educate the uneducated, and encourage migration from rural areas to cities, and from the South to the North, does it mean that the level of tolerance in this country would be raised and our problems solved? At times Dr. Stouffer writes almost as if this were so. But clearly there are two problems. One can legitimately be called the problem of intolerance—the problem of the meanness and narrowness that are the natural consequences, at least in America, of isolation, poverty, "lack of advantages," and old age. The intolerant are as likely to keep a socialist from opening his mouth as to throw a Communist into jail. Communism as a special and unique problem does not affect this kind of person—his intolerance predates it and will outlive it. This is in effect a *social* problem. The Communists and their actions are occasions for the expression of this intolerance rather than its true cause. Dr. Stouffer is right in linking this kind of intolerance to Communism with intolerance of unorthodoxy in the fields of economics and religion (which is what his scale of intolerance does). About this aspect of the problem, Dr. Stouffer tells a fairly complete story.

But then there is the matter of Communism as a *political* problem and how to deal with it, which is also intimately related to the problem and state of civil liberties in this country. This political problem is a much more fluid and changeable matter than the social problem of intolerance, more dependent on changes in

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international affairs and domestic American politics than on a change in the educational level or the encouragement of internal migration at home.

When one comes to the political aspects of the problem of Communism and civil liberties, Professor Stouffer is much less adequate. Indeed, it is impossible in his book to find any way of distinguishing the two positions on Communism and civil liberties that are politically relevant today—the position of those who feel that no measures at all should be taken against native Communists, and the position of those who feel that Smith Acts and McCarran Acts are important and necessary defenses against Communism.

The reason it is impossible to distinguish between these two positions is that Professor Stouffer does not study the problem of Communism directly, but treats it as part of the larger problem of "conformism." Thus, in his scale of tolerance, we cannot distinguish those who are tolerant of Communists from those who are intolerant, but only those who are tolerant of Communists *and* of atheists, socialists, and so on, from those who are not. And since the scale mixes up all these forms of tolerance, the reader—or at least a reader like myself, who does not conceive of the problem of Communism as only a sub-variant of the problem of toleration of non-conformism—is not helped in his effort to understand the different attitudes toward Communism in this country.

The great majority of Americans taking a harsh view of Communism will of course be the intolerant—the more poorly educated, those from more backward areas, and so on. They will be the ones who also disapprove of socialists and atheists. Yet there is also a minority of people who feel it necessary to take strong measures against Communists and who are not undereducated and underprivileged. In a political context, it is their views that matter —as well, of course, as the views of that other large group of the educated and privileged who would not limit the liberties and privileges of Communists. It is the views of the educated that matter because they write the newspapers, fill the legislatures, and even become heads of American Legion posts and regents of the DAR. Of course, the views of the intolerant mass of people matter too—it is because of their existence that the relatively small minority of the educated which is very strongly anti-Communist can gain such wide popular support.

These two very different attitudes to Communism are never distinguished in Dr. Stouffer's study. The majority rules in sociology as in voting; and if the majority of those who would not let a Communist teach or make a public speech are poorly educated, come from backward areas, are old, and won't stand for socialism and Communism in the schools and the public market place—why, then, that characterizes that position. Yet the person who would not let a Communist teach in a public school because he would not let anyone with whom he strongly disagreed teach—socialist, atheist, or what have you—is very different from the person who would not let a Communist teach because he thinks indoctrination has no place in education.

These are admittedly subtle distinctions for a public opinion poll (not that they could not be made if one were aware of their importance). But I think they are crucial for an understanding of the whole problem of Communism, conformism, and civil liberties which Dr. Stouffer has taken up. If one does not make these distinctions one can easily, by a process of damnation by association, dismiss important political positions which deserve to be discussed on their own merits and not on the basis of who holds them. One cannot dispose of the question of what measures are necessary to deal with Communism by *ad hominem* arguments, by demonstrating that the poor and ignorant, for the most part, want to get tough with Communists and the enlightened, for the most part, don't.

Yet this, it seems to me, is just what tends to happen in Dr. Stouffer's book. In sum, there is a failure to distinguish between what we may call the *intolerant*—those who will say "Kill the Communists" as easily as they say "Kill the umpire"—and the *concerned*—those who are sincerely worried about Communism and think strong measures are necessary to deal with it.

This failure emerges most strikingly when Dr. Stouffer considers just what is the relationship between concern with Communism and tolerance. As the reader will recall, a scale of tolerance was derived by Dr. Stouffer from a series of questions about advocates of government ownership of industry, opponents of religion, and accused and actual Communists. A new factor is now introduced—that of "perception of the internal Communist threat." This is measured by a scale which includes such

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questions as, "Do you think there are any Communists teaching in American public schools (or working in American defense plants, etc.)?" followed by the question, "How much danger is there that these Communists can hurt the country. . . ."* The author considers the relationship between the perception of the internal Communist threat and tolerance of great importance, on the ground that, if there is a positive relationship, we might expect an increase in tolerance if the internal Communist threat is perceived as falling; while a negative relationship—that is, one in which intolerance goes hand in hand with a perception that the internal Communist threat is unimportant—would suggest the need for "a long-sustained program of public education" to increase tolerance. It turns out that there is a positive relationship. And on this basis, the author concludes, "The relationship is high enough and consistent enough to suggest that *if* the internal Communist threat is now exaggerated, and *if* the American people were told this and believed it, tolerance of non-conformists would increase."

*The scale for determining "perception of the Communist danger" seems to me to be a very peculiar instrument. It consists of questions of the type: Do you think there are any Communists in public grade schools . . . government . . . the country in general . . . colleges and universities . . . defense plants? (in that order) followed by the question: How great a danger do you think they are? The order is important, for, according to the theory of scales, if a person accepts the idea that Communists are a danger in the public schools, he will accept the idea that they are a danger in all other areas, too. This will make him "most perceptive." The next category would be those who reject the idea that Communists are a danger in the public schools but think they are a danger everywhere else. And so on right down to the "least perceptive" who do not think that Communists are a danger even in defense plants. While I am the first to bow before the mysteries of science, I cannot see the reason for this order, and refuse to believe that the scale—whatever else it is measuring—is measuring something that might legitimately be called "perception of the internal Communist threat." I think Dr. Stouffer, in view of the importance he gives to the scale, should have explained how it happens that a person who believes Communists are a danger in the public schools is more "perceptive of the Communist threat" than one who just believes Communists are a danger "in the country in general." Dr. Stouffer rests on the mathematical procedure by which his scale was set up; he should have gone further and determined just what this scale was measuring.

The conclusion of this demonstration is that any lover of tolerance should logically desire the perception of the Communist danger to be low—for low perception, Dr. Stouffer's figures show us, is related to high tolerance. But what has been forgotten is that as a matter of fact there are people who perceive the Communist threat and yet are tolerant, and while they do not form a majority of either category (that is, of the perceptive or the tolerant), we may nevertheless decide that the best policy is to try to increase their number. And this can be done not only by teaching tolerance to those who perceive the Communist threat, but teaching the tolerant about Communism.

We are all familiar with the kind of thinking that Dr. Stouffer has, I think, inadvertently fallen into: the position that says, if we want people to be more tolerant of Negroes, it is possibly best that they should not believe there are a disproportionately large number of Negro criminals and paupers—even though there are.

The error in this kind of thinking, as Paul Kecskemeti argued brilliantly in COMMENTARY in his critique of *The Authoritarian Personality* ("Prejudice in the Catastrophic Perspective," March 1951), is the assumption that everything associated with a good is itself a good. Dr. Kecskemeti pointed out that if anti-Semitism is associated with hostility to Soviet Russia, and lack of anti-Semitism with friendliness to Soviet Russia, it does not follow that we have to encourage friendliness toward the Soviet Union to encourage friendship for the Jews. These relations are, if not fortuitous, then certainly historical, products of given moments, given combinations of events. Such relations may change. It then becomes incumbent on us to decide, from the point of view of our own values and our own conception of the world, what is good and what is true, and try to achieve that directly, rather than slavishly accept whatever cluster of attitudes fall together at any given moment as organically and necessarily related.

In the present situation, it would follow that if we believe it is true that native Communists exist and have played a considerable role in American government, society, and culture, and still play some role—and this is what I believe—then we need not resign ourselves to having these truths forgotten or actively denied, simply because such forgetting

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or denial has been shown to have some sort of statistical connection (in the present era) with tolerance.

In any case, it would seem crucial to determine whether internal Communism represents a threat or not: if it does not, there is no conflict between the values of truth and tolerance. If it does, then there is a conflict, for Dr. Stouffer seems to take it for granted that the sensible position of being aware of the threat and yet upholding tolerance cannot be expected to grow. But on this crucial *if*, Dr. Stouffer does not commit himself. Dr. Stouffer, I think, would like to take the position that the threat is exaggerated; but hampered by a crippling notion of scientific objectivity, he never quite decides to take the leap. He seems to me to have fallen victim to that canon of contemporary social scientific research which defines the universe of any study by the methods used in that study. Because there is no way of deciding the extent of the Communist threat with the methods of public opinion research, Dr. Stouffer finds it impossible to take a stand on this question. And yet if social science is to make a contribution to a problem it must try to encompass it in all its reality—and not limit itself to that part of it which falls within the purview of its favorite methods.

As a matter of fact, of course, there are many people, even in Dr. Stouffer's sample, who are fully aware of the true dimensions of the Communist problem in this country, without being intolerant (just as there are others who rate low in perception of the internal Communist threat and are intolerant). It is just these people who bulk large in the leadership groups in this country. But Dr. Stouffer is so interested in pursuing the majority, that large group which has a high perception of the Communist danger and is intolerant, or has a low perception and is tolerant, that he ignores these rather crucial minority groups. We find out little about them—who they are, where they live, and how their numbers might be increased. Dr. Stouffer works with one major value—tolerance. Everything else is secondary. And what is associated (statistically speaking) with tolerance should flourish like the green bay tree, and what is associated with intolerance should wither away and die, if we are to have a good society. Recall his conclusion: "*If* the internal Communist threat is now exaggerated, and *if* the American people were told this and believed it, tolerance of nonconformists would increase" [my italics].

To return, then, to our distinction between the intolerant and the concerned—between those who want to throw the Communists into jail just as they want to throw anyone they disagree with into jail, and those who are aware of the existence of a Communist problem and differ as to what measures are necessary to deal with it.

Dr. Stouffer, it seems to me, has told us the story about the first group, which must indeed always concern us, and in doing so he has made a contribution to sociology. The second group, however, is for the most part lost to sight in his sample, and its crucial characteristics cannot be easily discerned. It is this group which is most important politically. Their tolerance (or intolerance) is different from that of the less educated majority; their perception (or want of perception) of the internal Communist threat is also different. It is possible to be tolerant out of ignorance and a complete indifference to the political life of the nation. It is also possible to be tolerant out of a commitment to democracy. It is possible to be intolerant out of a sadistic and brutal inquisitiveness about other people. It is also possible to be "intolerant," at least to some extent, out of a love of one's country and a rational and strong belief that it is so seriously threatened that certain measures, unnecessary in other times and in the face of other enemies, may be necessary.

Without an awareness of these distinctions—which play no role in Dr. Stouffer's study—one can make no contribution to the solution of the political problems of Communism and civil liberties; and I think he has made none.

But I think we should be grateful for what he has done. The facts he has reported, on the general distribution of tolerance in this country, and the general calmness (or indifference) about Communism are interesting and, I think, reflect the actual situation in the country. Dr. Stouffer concludes soberly, and I believe correctly, that there is "no evidence that the country as a whole is suffering from quivering fear or from an anxiety neurosis about the internal Communist threat. If there is a sickness, the clinical symptoms are more like that of dietary deficiency."

He refers, of course, to the incredible evidence, quoted a while back, of the willingness of the mass of the American people to suppress

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the speech and rights of anyone with whom they disagree. But even here, he sees hopeful signs in the remarkable impact of education on these attitudes. Since with the passing years, larger and larger proportions of Americans reach higher and higher levels of education, they should take more and more tolerant attitudes. (The same patterns may be seen at work in connection with anti-Semitism. Education may not basically affect people, but it teaches them what is right, and, for things about which they do not feel passionately, like Jews and maybe civil liberties, they will bow to the right.) Dr. Stouffer also points out that the greater tolerance of the big-city dwellers, the Westerners, and the better educated is very likely the product of the fact that they come in touch with all kinds of people and their local prejudices wear off. And since the tendency seems to be in the direction of even more of this internal migration, one might expect this factor, too, to lead to greater tolerance.

These conclusions seem valid to me, but they apply to the mass of the intolerant—not to the minority of the concerned whose views will be shaped by political events and decisions, not by long-term social developments. Yet it is a virtue of this kind of work that, once the questionnaires are distributed and the results are in, they can be turned to by other people seeking solutions to problems not considered by those who conducted the original study. It may be hoped that this study will yield more answers to the questions of future investigators than those presently found in it.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

A Critical Exchange

To the Editor of Commentary:

I cannot see that Mr. Greenberg has the right to feel aggrieved [see exchange of letters in June issue] because in replying to his challenge (and if he hadn't brought in my name—and in that apparently considered and calculated way—I should have written no comment on his essay), I accepted the answer so obviously proposed by the essay itself ["The Jewishness of Frank Kafka," April 1955] for the question it faced me with: Why is Mr. Greenberg's valuation of Kafka's work so defiantly at odds with his account of it? To charge him with bad taste—*that* would indeed have been gratuitously discourteous; it would have been nothing to the point, and it didn't occur to me: one would hardly at any time, I imagine, find it to the point to talk about "bad taste" in discussing an over-estimate of Kafka.

That Kafka had a striking originality and something in the nature of genius I explicitly recognized. That the originality comes out in a remarkable and idiosyncratic prose I could hardly fail to be aware. For, in spite of Mr. Greenberg's hint at my lack of first-hand acquaintance, I was familiar with Kafka before he could be said to have, in England, a reputation. I don't claim to be a critic of German literature, but, perceiving the interest of Kafka, I took the trouble to obtain him in German, and I remember (perhaps I may record by way of making my point) discussing the characteristics of the prose with Professor René Wellek —then much nearer to Prague, and to the *Kreis* about which he can talk so enlighteningly—twenty years ago.

Mr. Greenberg's admonition to me to read Kafka "without consulting my critical principles" conveys an unfounded imputation. What I bring to Kafka is what I bring to Lawrence, and what, it seems to me, anyone interested in literature must bring to any writer: the question, "How am I to take this, and what is the nature of the interest it offers?" In the case of Kafka one cannot give an intelligent answer to the second part of the question without dealing very largely in limiting judgments. How essentially this is so Mr. Greenberg's essay illustrates. It was *his* account of Kafka that I summarized in my reply to the challenge, and he hasn't told us what it is in Kafka that, missed by me in my impercipience, justifies the high estimate of him as a creative power. He merely asserts that, "in his own way," Kafka "transcends his fragmentariness and his 'imprisonment' "; except for an unenlightening reference to "humor," he doesn't tell us how.

What Mr. Greenberg means by Lawrence's "obsessions" I don't know, but I certainly cannot grant that there is any disability in Lawrence to set against Kafka's neurosis. As for "unevennesses," what voluminous author is not uneven? But instead of fragmentariness, monotony and tautology (Mr. Greenberg's words for Kafka) I find in Lawrence an immense body of perfect and incomparably varied work in the short story and tale, and a massive and profoundly original creative achievement in the novel that makes him one of the greatest of all writers. I have given the grounds for my valuation in a detailed analysis of the work —analysis that essentially *is* an exemplification of the approach to literature that leads me to disagree with Mr. Greenberg about Kafka.

Mr. Greenberg says: "I am surprised that Dr. Leavis is not aware of how conclusively, and how often, the fallacies in his position have been demonstrated." That again is only a form of mere assertion—and the form suggests that Mr. Greenberg doesn't know how the conclusive demonstration would be done, and doesn't at bottom believe that it *could* be. How could he, being himself interested in literature and committed to criticism (in spite of his odd intimation that *he* is content to rest in a vaguely heightened "sense"—"sense" of the possibilities of life that is produced in him by literature)? His offer to prove my position untenable seems to me curiously naive: "Lawrence's assumption [about the relation of life to art], followed to its logical consequence, would make good taste in art a sign of wisdom and of the capacity for wise action." One may readily grant that good taste in art (Mr. Greenberg chooses his phrase cannily) is not necessarily a sign of securely attained wisdom and a consequent capacity for wise action; but it remains true that intelligence about (say) Kafka and Lawrence is intelligence about life. When, in determining how we take this, that and the

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other work of literature, we settle into our essential determinations and discriminations of sympathetic response, the perceptions, readjustments and implicit decisions entailed have—if the experience strikes us as new and significant—direct bearings on our future personal living. And this remains true, even if habit is potent and change difficult, and "bearings on" do not become at once "consequences for." Taking a tip from Mr. Greenberg, I might say that his denial of this assumption I have outlined, followed to its logical consequence, would lead to a doctrine of aestheticism and Pure Art Value. But this way of putting things might be taken to suggest that such a doctrine could of itself be consistently and logically held. That, however, I don't believe; the muddle and confusion that theoretical adhesion to it must portend mean, I think, that no one seriously interested in literature has ever readily held it.

F. R. Leavis

Downing College
Cambridge, England

Mr. Greenberg *writes:*

I brought Dr. Leavis's name in because I felt it was the one that had to be mentioned if I had room for only one name. As much as I may disagree with him theoretically and practically, I happen to think Dr. Leavis the greatest, and truest, living literary critic (especially now that T. S. Eliot is in decline). I am glad that he has given me this opportunity to say so.

Also, he has me dead to rights. I do hold with art for art's sake: that is, nothing else can do for us what art does. If I agreed with Dr. Leavis, I would have to conclude that art was a practical substitute for life and experience.

In his *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* Kant demonstrated that one cannot prove an aesthetic judgment in discourse. Let Dr. Leavis see whether he can, in practice or theory, refute Kant's arguments. For what he is claiming in effect is that one can so adequately exhibit in *words* one's grounds for an aesthetic judgment that agreement with it is compelled by the rules of evidence and logic. Kant holds that one can appeal only to the other person's *taste* as exercised through experience of the work of art under discussion.

As for one's "essential determinations and discriminations of sympathetic response": these are excluded in many works that Dr. Leavis would, I feel sure, agree are masterpieces of literature. *Oedipus Rex* and *King Lear* are among them. Morality is built into the mind, and works of art have to respect the limitations that morality imposes on fancied action; otherwise the reader's or observer's interest cannot be held, whether in high- or lowbrow literature. But this does not mean that we have to learn from literature in order to enjoy it properly, or that those who do not learn from it are in no position to judge it. Art, in my view, explains to us what we already feel, but it does not do so discursively or rationally; rather, it acts out an explanation in the sense of working on our feelings at a remove sufficient to protect us from the consequences of the decisions made by our feelings in response to the work of art. Thus it relieves us of the pressure of feeling. I agree with Aristotle that art is catharsis, but the catharsis leaves us no wiser than before.

Agreement on Maimonides

To the Editor of Commentary:

It has been said, I think by Mordecai Kaplan, that it is hard to disagree with one's teachers, harder to disagree with one's colleagues, and hardest of all to disagree with one's students. But I hope my task is, after all, not so hard in replying to the very friendly criticism of a former pupil of mine, now the highly esteemed Grand Rabbi of Luxembourg, Dr. Ch. C. Lehrmann ("Pupil and Master," February 1955).

I did not wish to imply—as he seems to believe I did—that Maimonides ever "denied the authority of poetic and even anthropomorphic language." All I wanted to say was that, according to Maimonides, the true interpretation of this authoritative poetic language of the Bible demanded from us that we see in it only an esoteric wrapping of much profounder abstract truth. And I, instead, suggest that we should dare take the word of Scripture neither in its literal sense nor as a merely "popular" way of expressing abstract philosophical wisdom, but to live with it in the way it presents itself: as poetic truth, as profoundest poetic insight not directly translatable into any genuine philosophical language.

As Dr. Lehrmann agrees with me about the specially high value of poetic truth as such, why should there be no agreement between us concerning the fact that Maimonides thought it essential to subscribe to poetic language only inasmuch as it expresses in an indirect way metaphysical dogma while we—in some accord with ancient orthodoxy—can return to the letter of the Torah without Maimonides' fear of seeing it understood in a fundamentalist literal sense?

David Baumgardt

Columbia University
New York City

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Rabbinic Mind

ORGANIC THINKING; A STUDY IN RABBINIC THOUGHT. By MAX KADUSHIN. The Jewish Theological Seminary of America. 367 pp. $3.00.

THE RABBINIC MIND. By MAX KADUSHIN. The Jewish Theological Seminary of America. 394 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by DAVID BAUMGARDT

THE characterization and evaluation of Talmudic thought in the light of one's own time is one of the most difficult tasks a theologian, historian, or literary critic can attempt. Maimonides and Joseph Caro both did that in the past, and thereby deeply influenced the whole development of Judaism. In our century, Jewish leaders like Solomon Schechter, Leo Baeck, Louis Finkelstein, and two Protestant theologians, Robert Travers Herford and George Foote Moore, have tried, in their several different ways, to bring the thought of the Pharisees back to life. Now Max Kadushin, in his two recent works on rabbinic thought, has apparently set himself the same great task.

To this end Dr. Kadushin uses a formidable array of contemporary philosophical terms. He speaks of "organismal conception"; "organismic coherence of value concepts in contrast to cognitive concepts"; "sub-concepts, conceptual phases, and auxiliary ideas in integrated wholes of thought." Wary though I am of this sort of language, I wish, nonetheless, to offer as much constructive comment on Dr. Kadushin's achievement as seems to me possible, and so I will limit myself to a few critical observations and try to indicate some further developments of his trend of argument that may be desirable.

ANTI-SEMITES, as well as many minor historians of ideas, have tended to be annoyed by the seeming lack of straightforwardness in the presentation of topics, and by the apparent want of consistent clear-cut reasoning, in both the Talmud and the Midrashim—in fact, in the whole post-Biblical literature of Judaism. Schechter explicitly, and others implicitly, have insisted that such reactions derive essentially from Western misconceptions as to the nature and goal of Oriental ways of thought. Dr. Kadushin rightly takes his stand on similar grounds. He readily grants that it would be vain to look for a rigid, logically ordered system of articles of creed in rabbinic thought, or even for a clearly fixed, logical order of ritualistic and ethical commandments. But he sees something "basically different" at work in the rabbinic mind: a thinking in "organismic concepts" that rejects abstract definitions, classifications, and logical inferences.

Such stress does Dr. Kadushin lay on the term "organic thinking" that he makes it the title of his first work, giving the reference to rabbinic thought only in the subtitle; and this emphasis is sustained in his second book, though there it must share equal place with the term "value concept." This latter, he holds, indicates a hitherto unknown characteristic of all human valuation. Philosophers, he says, have so far spoken of value only as a *subjectively* appraised entity; but an entirely different and new term is here called for, namely "value concept," which, he thinks, signifies something that is *objectively* valuable. This claim to originality, however, should not be pressed too strongly, I feel. Quite a number of modern English works on value theory use the term "value" in more or less the same sense as Dr. Kadushin; the *Encyclopedia Britannica* speaks of the "value notion"; and the plural of value concept, *Wertbegriffe,* used in an emphatically objective sense, is very common in German philosophical and non-philosophical literature. Irrelevant though this question of terminology may seem, a crucial interest certainly attaches to the question whether the mere term "value concept," when applied to ideas and acts, is a sufficient guarantee of their objective validity. It evidently is not.

German and English Idealist thinkers have often ascribed to "reason" precisely the same

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merits which Dr. Kadushin attributes to "organic thinking." Reason was characterized as being able to provide a synthetic, organic, and concrete comprehension of life, in contrast to the mere dissecting, analyzing, and abstracting capacity of the understanding—the *understanding* being defined here in the sense of Locke, Hume, and modern science. The function of reason is, in fact, often described in Idealist writing in exactly the same terms used by Professor Kadushin—as concretizing, organic, integrating, dynamic, and as being, therefore, the sole instrument for coping with the realities of cultural and spiritual life. Yet, for all that, only too many of the "organic" value concepts pronounced by these English and German thinkers to be true values (e.g. the Hegelian concept of war) have turned out to be of extremely questionable objective validity. Thus, in his characterization of rabbinic logic, Dr. Kadushin remains far more lucid in the delineation of what it is not than what it is. Like Wilhelm Dilthey in depicting his "methodology of the humanities," and F. H. Bradley in his description of "organic thought," Dr. Kadushin is very successful in exposing the shortcomings of common logic; yet in specifying his own approach to his topic, he remains far too loose and vague.

How does Dr. Kadushin's methodology work when used for the concrete interpretation of rabbinic sayings? For one thing, he reminds us, rightly, that the Rabbis did not make an explicit distinction between ritualistic and ethical precepts, and that only modern thinking finds it necessary to divide *mitzvot* into two such utterly different classes. And he also rightly warns us against underrating the value of the ritualistic laws; they have been of decisive importance in the preservation of Judaism and, like the customs and social habits of other peoples and religions, have done much to refine the "inward life" of the Jew, and cultivate the aspirations of that life.

So far so good. But then Dr. Kadushin goes on to argue ". . . first . . . a number of mizwot by their content would have to fall into both [the ritual and the ethical] categories at once"; and "second," as "many ritualistic mizwot foster and develop the inward life and so are indispensable to the development of moral and ethical attitudes . . . the division of the mizwot into the two simple categories of the ritualistic and the ethical is inadmissible. . . . This is, indeed, what we should expect of a theology that is organic, the elements of which are always so integrally interrelated as to permit of no hard-and-fast classifications." Well, if "organic thinking" is held to operate this way, it could be used to justify everything, on the ground that the injunction, say, against eating sturgeon—for which there is no hygienic or any other tenable kind of reason today—is specifically of the same type as the commandment "Thou shalt not kill."

True, Dr. Kadushin takes into account the fact that the Rabbis designated some *mitzvot* as "grave" and others as "light." But this is meant to acknowledge merely a gradation in the urgency of the different laws, and not the toleration of specific differences between them. And Dr. Kadushin adds that in the *Seder Elijahu* there appears, "perhaps, a belief that all ritualistic mizwot have 'a reason,' an ethical purpose, ultimately to be made known . . . in the World to Come." But if this is so, how much light, then, is shed by "organic thinking" on our present understanding of the bold thesis that the command enjoining the "washing of hands" and the prohibition against theft should "alike be placed in the same category of divine law"? Dr. Kadushin belittles characterizations of democracy which limit themselves to such definitions as "shared respect and economic balance." But is his discussion of the lack of difference between ethical and ritualistic laws more illuminating, really, than such definitions of democracy?

To turn to questions far removed from Halachah and the world of *mitzvot,* there is a very profound passage in the Babylonian Talmud at the beginning of *Abodah Zarah* 3b. This passage is quoted by Dr. Kadushin in his *Rabbinic Mind*. It says that God spends part of every day laughing. "God's sport is with Leviathan, a symbol for Satan. . . . And [God] laughs [literally, "there is laughter before Him"] when wicked Nations of the World arrogantly challenge Him to come upon them and destroy them." What can "organismic thinking" make of this great saying? Nothing more than to state that it contains "the implication that the arrogant nations who challenge God will ultimately be destroyed."

It strikes me as scarcely warrantable to draw such an implication from this rabbinic thought. But in any case how inadequate seems the implication for understanding the sublimity and

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significance of God's laughter. This bold and original conception of a divinity that reacts with laughter, instead of with anger, to the defiance and blasphemies of man is, as I have tried to document in detail elsewhere, utterly inconceivable to classical Christian thought, or to that of practically any other religion.

A God laughing at the incongruity of his omnipotence set against the boasting and vainglory of rebellious men, and a God to whom the Devil is no more than a daily object of mirth—these are post-Biblical versions of the might of God which seem to me rather different in tone and mood from related accounts in the Psalms (2:4 and 104:26). Nonetheless, intimacy with God that reaches the point of describing His daily pastime, and of praising Him for His laughter—that sets off the imagination with a force almost rivaling that of the most emphatic Biblical images of God's might.

Such ideas, developed by Jews in centuries that saw them living almost without interruption under the heel of brutal conquerors, display a moral greatness and a freedom from any petty desire for vengeance that deserve much more recognition than they have found so far. Here and elsewhere, the rabbinic mind manifests an inner independence, a superior playfulness, and a religious serenity that in my opinion are much more important than the many rather conventional observations Dr. Kadushin has to make on Talmudic texts.

Dr. Kadushin's opposition to any rigid modern codification, any cut and dried systematization of rabbinic thought, is fully justified, but it seems to me that the application of his somewhat cumbersome apparatus of "organismic thinking" needs considerable refining.

Soviet Life

NINE SOVIET PORTRAITS. By RAYMOND A. BAUER. Technology Press of M.I.T. and John Wiley. 190 pp. $3.95.

VORKUTA. By JOSEPH SCHOLMER. Holt. 302 pp. $3.75.

FACE OF A VICTIM. By ELIZABETH LERMOLO. Harper. 311 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE J. LIEBER

A GREAT many books have been written about the political, social, and economic aspects of the Soviet world, but we know very little about the day-to-day life, thoughts, and feelings of the Soviet citizen. The three books at hand help in varying degrees to supply this lack.

The scholarly and readable *Nine Soviet Portraits,* by Raymond A. Bauer, author of an earlier book in the same field, *The New Man in Soviet Psychology,* is by far the best. Mr. Bauer uses the fictional form to image the lives of nine typical Soviet citizens: a factory manager, doctor, secret police agent, student, tractor driver, creative artist, housewife, woman collective farmer, and party secretary. But these sketches are fictional in form only; their content is based on a painstaking analysis of a series of interviews with Soviet emigrés, and a thorough knowledge of the background of Soviet life. By skillfully relating these personal histories to such external factors as the statutes of a collective farm or the regulations governing the rights and duties of a Soviet doctor, Mr. Bauer has given life and meaning, and, most important, depth, to what we know of Soviet society.

Mr. Bauer's Russians emerge as people of flesh and blood, consistent and believable; in their aggregate, however, they neither embrace the main sectors of Soviet society nor do they adequately present a specific sector within it. As a result, the total picture we get of Soviet society is somewhat diffuse and possibly even misleading. The author states that he deliberately focused his attention on the "middle ranks of the elite," in part because "their contribution to the functioning of the system is so crucial, and the degree of skill and initiative required of them so considerable, that control and motivation of their behavior is a matter of life or death to the system as a whole." But *Nine Soviet Portraits* either ignores entirely or says very little about Soviet scientists, engineers, teachers, economists, military officers, shockworkers, and others who hold key positions in the "middle ranks of the elite." Some of these groups, particularly the technical experts, not only enjoy prestige, power, and a high standard of living, but their relation to what Mr. Bauer calls the "all-pervasive politicization of life" is qualitatively different from that of the professional people, party functionaries, and bureaucrats he describes.

Because of their vital importance to the regime, a good number of experts enjoy a degree of freedom, both professional and private, denied to the majority of Soviet citizens. It is known, for instance, that institutions of higher

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learning regularly receive a wide range of publications from the West, and that translation pools have been organized to enable selected students and teachers to read, discuss, and use their contents. What the author fails to make explicit is that there are strategically situated persons in Soviet society whose conflicts with the regime do not necessarily grow out of their social roles but out of their "disinterested" observations of the injustices of Soviet life, out of the discrepancies between propaganda promises and Soviet reality. These privileged groups of course suffer from political interference, but it is often scarcely comparable with what the creative artist, who is Mr. Bauer's prototype of the intellectual, has to endure.

On the whole, however, to recognize the existence of some measure of professional freedom in the Soviet system is not to invalidate the main theses implicit in Mr. Bauer's study. By and large, membership in any section of the Soviet elite requires the individual to conform as closely as possible to a rigid norm. Still, for some people, such conformity does not always involve the petty egotism, cowardice, and fears that warp the lives of Mr. Bauer's characters.

Owing in part to its omissions, *Nine Soviet Portraits* tends to overemphasize the actual or potential hostility of the managerial elite to the Soviet system. On the other hand, by excluding a worker from his range of subjects, and by failing to touch on the critical nationality problem, Mr. Bauer's work minimizes the tensions inherent in the process of the industrialization and Russification of Soviet society.

THESE two latter aspects of Soviet life—its domination by Great Russians and the role of the industrial proletariat—are essential elements in the story told by Joseph Scholmer in *Vorkuta*. Dr. Scholmer is a German and former Communist who was imprisoned by the Gestapo and later became an official in the East German Ministry of Health; arrested by the NKVD in 1949, he was accused of espionage, interrogated to the point where he attempted suicide, sentenced to twenty-five years of hard labor, and shipped off to the Vorkuta concentration camp in the Arctic. There, in the summer of 1953, he witnessed the first mass strike ever held in the "fatherland of socialism."

Dr. Scholmer makes some shrewd observations on individuals in the camps and on camp life in general, but he is also given to sweeping generalizations many of which are palpably unwarranted. He contends, for example, often intemperately, that the West fails to understand the nature of social relations in the Soviet Union, particularly the Soviet exploitation of labor, both "free" and captive, and therefore missed a unique chance to bring about the downfall of the regime: "The strike in Vorkuta in the summer of 1953 could have spread from the camps to the factories. Brutal military suppression would have been the signal for a general rising. . . ."

The trouble with this argument is that it equates conditions at Vorkuta with conditions in other camps and in the Soviet Union as a whole. The author fails to see that only in a concentration camp are the social lines so clearly drawn: despite informers among the inmates, the party and secret police remain outsiders, and it is in the nature of the situation that prisoners should unite against them. But as Mr. Bauer indicates in his *Nine Soviet Portraits*, the "free" Soviet individual's relations to the system are never that simple.

Dr. Scholmer's comments occasionally indicate something of a Marxist hangover. He sees Soviet society divided into classes, each with its own clearly defined aims, "consciousness," and interests: ". . . ever since the beginning of the first Five Year Plan, a large industrial proletariat has been developing in the Soviet Union and it is being forced to live under conditions similar to those endured by the European workingmen in the early days of capitalism. This proletariat is just as discontented as its counterpart of a hundred years or so ago, and it has the same fundamentally hostile attitude to the existing order." This is not only an oversimplification of 19th-century capitalism, but an almost meaningless comparison. Soviet industrial workers in general enjoy a greater measure of prestige, a higher standard of living, more privileges, and better chances for advancement than any other group except the party-state managerial aristocracy. They resent and resist the regime *as people, not in their character as members of the working class.* If they are to overthrow the system, they probably will have to be led by a vocal, determined, strategically placed elite drawn almost certainly from the "middle class," a group not considered in the author's speculations.

He is on somewhat safer ground when discussing the potentially disruptive force represented by subjugated minorities: Ukrainians, Balts, Jews, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Tartars, Circas-

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sians, and others, all of whom have suffered under Great Russian domination. But here again, Dr. Scholmer's speculations do not take into account differences between camp life, where national solidarity is almost automatic, and Soviet society at large, where it is far less real and effective.

According to Dr. Scholmer, "The anti-Semitic feeling in the camps at Vorkuta is more intense than it ever was even among the anti-Semitic German middle classes under Hitler." In addition to the brutality and deprivations suffered by all inmates, Jews have to live side by side with their most fanatical persecutors, men who enthusiastically murdered hundreds of Jews under the Nazi occupation. Jews are tormented by anti-Communists, who blame them for the regime's atrocities, and also by Communists, who readily succumbed to Stalin's anti-Semitic campaign. However, in view of the author's tendency to sensational overstatement, we must question his forecast of a wholesale pogrom of Russia's four million Jews the day the regime collapses.

BY CONTRAST with *Vorkuta,* Elizabeth Lermolo's *Face of a Victim* is an unassuming, almost pedestrian book. It tells the story of the author's eight years' imprisonment on a faked charge of having been connected with the 1934 murder of Sergei Kirov, Leningrad party boss and then No. 2 man in the hierarchy, whose assassination touched off the successive waves of Stalinist purges and terror in the 30's. Her interrogators and "judges" included Stalin himself, Voroshilov, Yezhov, and Vishinsky; among her cellmates were Zinoviev, Kamenev, and many other Old Bolshevik leaders. The author was in a position to learn much. But the book itself is so awkward, haphazard, and politically superficial that it misses much of its potential effect.

Among the many mysteries *Face of a Victim* does not explain satisfactorily is Stalin's part in the Kirov case. It is generally believed that he arranged to have his Leningrad lieutenant assassinated because he thought the latter was building a faction potentially dangerous to himself; and by attributing the murder to his enemies and rivals—including Zinoviev and Kamenev—he hoped to set the scene for their destruction. Elizabeth Lermolo corroborates this view, against Russian experts like Isaac Deutscher, who in his *Stalin* maintains that "the assassination of Kirov alarmed Stalin." But if Stalin was indeed the real murderer, then his personal interrogation of the author is difficult to understand. Was it a political ruse, or an inquisitorial grotesquerie?

The author's naivety, her unadorned directness, makes the account of her harrowing experiences all the more vivid. The story of her torture by the secret police, of the physical privations and mental anguish she suffered in the "isolators," is remarkable for what it reveals of human endurance. It is also remarkable for the light it throws on an aspect of Soviet "society" discussed neither in *Nine Soviet Portraits* nor in *Vorkuta.* Mr. Bauer's main characters are all "free," while Dr. Scholmer's people, though confined in camps, are nevertheless economically indispensable to the state. Both these books therefore deal with people who help to keep the Soviet system going. *Face of a Victim* tells us the terrible story of the expendable ones, most of whom are shot without trial. The few who, like the author, are held prisoner over many years survive only because the state needs their confessions to implicate others, or even because it "forgets" them. *Face of a Victim* is an all too vivid illustration of what *Pravda* meant when it recently reiterated the old Stalinist maxim: "Some think that if a man performs his work properly, nobody has the right to interfere with his private life. Such ideas are anti-Marxist and radically alien to the foundations of a Socialist society."

The Health of Modern Poetry

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF WALLACE STEVENS. Knopf. 534 pp. $7.50.

THE SHIELD OF ACHILLES. By W. H. AUDEN. Random House. 84 pp. $3.00.

SELECTED POEMS. By RANDALL JARRELL. Knopf. 205 pp. $4.00.

POEMS: 1923-1954. By e.e. cummings. Harcourt, Brace. 468 pp. $6.75.

Reviewed by ROBERT W. FLINT

WITH so many poems to consider in so little space, I want to take a deliberately partial view and see what can be done with an idea that virtually begs for discussion, in the aftermath of what we already begin to speak of nostalgically as one of the great eras of "English" poetry. "Modern" poetry, most of us know by now, has been a great deal stronger, more influential,

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closer to our habitual view of things, in a word *better,* than any general description of it has so far allowed. In spite of Edmund Wilson's funerary pronouncements some years ago to the effect that poetry was doomed to cede its position to the novel, and in spite of the complaints of such eminently discriminating writers as Lionel Trilling to the effect that "we," the consensus of anti-totalitarian liberals, cannot help feeling a bit queasy in the presence of so much apparent reaction, so much heraldic glitter and mannered violence, so many eagles and apocalyptic fires, so many Crazy Janes and so many bishops—in spite of these cries from the heart of the Humanities, we know our poetry has been at least the equal in "health," and in brilliance, of anything written during the same period.

The master example, of course, is Yeats. Sad, indeed, is the case of anyone who still can read his collected poems without discovering their humanity, gaiety, and profound *peacefulness.*

Where blood-begotten spirits come
And all complexities of fury leave,
Dying into a dance,
An agony of trance,
An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve.

Yeats is the master because he had the luck and the genius to experience more keenly than anyone else the "bitter furies of complexity" and to transform them into poetry of a uniquely sustained strength and excitement. Yeats—the poet himself, his success in creating an effective public personality out of seemingly chaotic instincts—dwindles into relative insignificance beside the poetry; for we know that he spent a good deal of random energy against insignificant enemies, that he *did* flirt with a sort of amateur and private fascism, and that the poetry has a wholeness and sanity the poet never achieved, nor really intended to achieve, elsewhere.

The answer, I think, to the deepening mystery of the difference between a writer's "own" opinions, as they are gleaned from diaries, letters, essays, and memoirs—or merely, as in the case of that fabulous insurance executive, Wallace Stevens, taken for granted—and the world we find in their work, lies in the increasing obliquity that circumstances have forced on modern poets; not something new, but an intensification of a quality that all but a very little great poetry has always had. We recognize the grave sweetness of Virgil's mind, but we find his Aeneas something of a prig. The poetry

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rather than the hero composes and disposes the turbulence. The strength Virgil communicates is not merely the sum of his avowed opinions. We find a wisdom in *Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, Lear,* and *Anthony and Cleopatra* far in excess of any moral excellence the characters can show. Of the latter play, Auden has written: "The key word in this play is: World. We see the glory of things as truly glorious. Even at her death the queen puts on her robe and crown. Seen in a certain light, the world can be this way. And Shakespeare does not want us to forget it." The healing idea of a World has never been more attractive to poets than it is now, but it is a shrunken world for poets as it is for novelists. When our energies are increasingly wasted in ideological rancor, the authority of a radically peaceable mind is harder than ever to assert. Richard Wilbur has imagined the poet as a kind of beneficent vulture:

. . . Then you'll see
That no more beautiful bird is in heaven's height,
No wider more placid wings, no watchfuller flight;
He shoulders nature there, the frightfully free,
The naked-headed one. Pardon him, you
Who dart in the orchard aisles, for it is he
Devours death, mocks mutability,
Has heart to make an end, keeps nature new.

But if the poet were no more than a soarer and hoverer, he might never be seen. What we do usually notice first of all in the modern poets is the violence, the grotesquerie, the exotic paraphernalia on the fringes of the poet's vision: what we usually understand last of all is that to reach deeper the poet must also reach further, that the more beguilingly oblique he can manage to be in the bulk of his poetry, the more movingly direct can be his controlling vision. To escape the dead hand of ideology; to write about kings and not promote imperialism; to write about simple people without condescension; to make a real world out of all the lesser warring realities: these are no mean accomplishments for a group of poets who individually were forced into ideological battles merely to become self-respecting citizens of whatever worlds seemed to offer them bread and butter.

This obliquity of subject and manner, consciously practiced, has been a strength as well as an impoverishment. The Victorian poets could rarely distinguish between the visionary and the real. They were innocently impaled on their own prophetic majesty, compelled by the cosy absolutism and reaction of the Victorian mind to be either, like Tennyson, First Lord of the Tea Table, or like Byron and Shelley, insensate romantic devils and infernal atheists. The "modern" poet, by contrast, has lost prestige and gained self-possession. He is often more European than the Victorians, more civilized and liberal in the classic sense of the words.

None of the poets have been more splendidly self-possessed than Wallace Stevens. His themes have been as constant as his poetry has been various.

The era of the idea of man, the cloak
And speech of Virgil dropped, that's where he walks,
That's where his hymns come crowding, hero-hymns,
Chorals for mountain voices and the moral chant,
Happy rather than holy but happy-high,
Day hymns instead of constellated rhymes,
Hymns of the struggle of the idea of god
And the idea of man, the mystic garden and
The middling beast. . . .

The greater poems are about modern man, his relation to his present and past; the lesser poems are about the imagination and poetry itself. When Stevens apostrophizes Santayana, in "To an Old Philosopher in Rome":

Things dark on the horizons of perception,
Become accompaniments of fortune, but
Of the fortune of the spirit, beyond the eye,
Not of its sphere, and yet not far beyond,

The human end in the spirit's greatest reach,
The extreme of the known in the presence of the extreme
Of the unknown . . .

we have an admirable description of his own method and genius. Stevens's range is extraordinary; from the sublimely facetious doodling of "He held the world upon his nose/ And this-a-way he gave a fling./ His robes and symbols, ai-yi-yi—/ And that-a-way he twirled the thing." to "Peter Quince at the Clavier," "Sunday Morning," "Esthétique du Mal," and "Notes Towards a Supreme Fiction"—poems, as Randall Jarrell describes them, "magnanimous, compassionate, but calmly exact, grandly plain."

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This, for instance, from "Esthétique du Mal":

Life is a bitter aspic. We are not
At the center of a diamond. At dawn
The paratroopers fall and as they fall
They mow the lawn. A vessel sinks in waves
Of people, as big bell-billows from its bell
Bell-bellow in the village steeple. Violets,
Great tufts, spring up from buried houses
Of poor dishonest people, for whom the steeple,
Long since rang out farewell, farewell, farewell.

Natives of poverty, children of malheur,
The gaiety of language is our seigneur.

Passion and exuberance, frivolity and sincerity mixed, on a level where we no longer need to distinguish between them—this is poetry of a high order and as little invidious in its mannerisms as could well be imagined. Stevens does not touch us as closely as does Yeats; his "moral chant" is never quite as compelling; but like Yeats he leads us to "peaks outsoaring possible adjectives," to a realm where possibility can become a reality more recognizable than our own.

THE other poets I mean to treat in what seems to me roughly the order of their skill in wearing the tragi-comic mask of the oblique. Auden has had roughly three marked phases: the *enfant terrible* of the Oxford-trained left; the professionally anxious prophet of liberal humanitarianism ("a Mann by more than marriage"); and his recent avatar, the Man of Reason, Sage of Cornelia Street, with echoes from previous incarnations and a benignly elusive religious piety, a fine, cheerful, witty facetiousness, a seasoned worldliness. The earliest phase was the most oblique and I think also the most memorable. Poems like "In Father's Footsteps" ("Our hunting fathers told us. . . .") or "What is that sound that so thrills the ear?" ("Ballad") have an ominously self-contained beauty, a security and sustained elevation of tone that he had to leave behind him as he became more reflective and conventionally "good." The middle phase, for all its occasional beauties, is probably the least happy. A painful schizophrenia develops between the tea-time terrorist who cries "Whoops, boys, someone has just pulled the plug. Here we go down the drain!" and the Rational Uncle who says, "There, there! Things are pretty awful, but they might be worse. Let's try to love one another and see what happens." It was Auden's time of adjustment to a new role and a new continent, a time of uncertain humor and sudden atavisms, of wild swings between the solemn and the silly, of a rather too fluent specialization in the modes of anxiety. After the war, however, a new evenness of tone appeared. *Nones* and now *The Shield of Achilles* (which contains the title poem of the preceding book) are clearly the work of the man one sees on the lecture platforms, looking and sounding like a cross between a beau of Bath and a successful rugger captain from the Midlands. The poems are often facetious, but the facetiousness is under control. They are witty without display and benign without fatuity. Whatever one may feel about Auden's seriousness or the lack of it, this transformation is all to the good and highly promising for the future. The new poems have a firmer grip on things than the poems of the middle period, a confidence that sufficient unto the poem is the subject thereof—and the subject may be nothing more world-shaking than "Plains," "Lakes," "Mountains," or "Streams" ("Just reeling off their names is ever so comfy").

Be subtle, various, ornamental, clever,
And do not listen to those critics ever
Whose crude provincial gullets crave in books
Plain cooking made still plainer by plain cooks,
As though the Muse preferred her half-wit sons;
Good poets have a weakness for bad puns.

The title poem, "A Shield for Achilles," is one of the best things he has done; in sixty-seven lines it accomplishes more than *The Age of Anxiety* ever quite accomplished in several hundred.

TO TURN to Randall Jarrell's *Selected Poems* is first to acknowledge a debt to his criticism; no poet has been more intelligently aware of what his colleagues were up to. Jarrell's poetry is both extremely oblique and extremely dense. It guards its monotony with a fine Baudelairean passion. The texture of the poems is strikingly even; within the topical groupings he gives them—"Lives," "Dream-work," "The Wide Prospect," "Once Upon a Time," "The World is Everything that is the Case," etc.—poems tend to blur into one another.

Like Auden, Jarrell is fond of personified abstractions like "Strife," "Reason," or the soul. His affections stretch back through the 19th century to the 18th. One enjoys an old-fashioned discursiveness, a pleasure in the harmlessly queer, a sensitive and amused ear for

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speech and idiom. Like Auden, Jarrell is a liberal born, though somewhat less playful in his gloom. He knows the worst and intends that we know it too. Evil in Jarrell is suffering, and suffering is radical. As Karl Shapiro has written: "The *Märchen*, the tales, the fables, the dreams, as well as the American girl drowsing in her college library, and the little English boy deranged by death and air raids: these materializations come at us with a relentlessness which is just short of unbearable. We bear them because we instinctively recognize the situations and because the poetry is so good we cannot turn away." But this side of Jarrell is only half of his range. There is also an immense, quiet, humorous relish, a broodingly dispassionate wit, both at their best in that charming historical *Marionettenspiel*, "An English Garden in Austria."

. . . It was not thus that you sang, Farinelli!
By graver stages, up a sterner way,
You won to those fields the candelabra lit,
Paused there; sang, as no man since has sung—
A present and apparent deity—the pure
Impossible airs of Arcady: and the calm
Horsehair-wigged shepherds, God of that Arcadian
Academy, wept inextinguishable tears.

The constant theme of Jarrell's criticism is the poet's need for a real world, a world not patched out of earlier poems. This need, in spite of fifty and more uses each in this book, of "dream" and "star" (and their relatives and cognates), perhaps even because of them, he has succeeded in filling for himself—a world as remote from our own as Germany, the Air Force, the public library, and the minds of extremely dreamy little girls can make it; but a very satisfactory world nonetheless.

About the collected e.e. cummings I can only say no poet *ought* to be as invulnerable as he has tried to make himself, so much in love with so few words ("love," "spring," "April," and about two dozen adjectives and adverbs), or so metaphysically fixed on so few subjects. Cummings is an intensely cerebral poet in the good old New England tradition; and every black on Brattle Street is white on Washington Square. Like most New Englanders (of which I am one), he is full of uninfectious enthusiasms and ritual boisterousness. Unlike Stevens, it must be regretfully said, he has never learned the art of writing deliberately low-keyed poems that bear reading in the mass and deepen our sense of his subject. Many of his poems are not merely verbal doodles (which would be tolerable) but typographical doodles as well, all displaying the same horrid ingenuity and all rather scarily portentous in their air of hidden profundities that remain stubbornly hidden. But there is also a kind of poetic justice in the difficulties Cummings makes for himself, for he is a minor poet of genius and might become angry if anyone and everyone found it out. The Anglo-Saxon taste for cheerful grotesquerie was never better displayed than in his sequence, "Five Americans" (subtitled, respectively, "Liz," "Mame," "Gert," "Marj," and "Fran"). These and a few of his other "portraits" have a spirit he must have caught from that other and greater professional exile, Tristan Corbière. Some of his "metaphysical" lyrics, among them "My father moved through dooms of love. . . ." are successful. Much of the genuinely racy, satirical Cummings—the part that breaks free of coyness—deserves to be enshrined in anthologies, as does the frail, Pre-Raphaelite music of such poems as the following:

perhaps it is to feel strike
the silver fish of her nakedness
with fins sharply pleasant, my

youth has travelled towards her these years

or to snare the timid like
of her mind to my mind that i
am come by little countries to the yes

of her youth.

And if somebody hears
what i say—let him be pitiful:
because I've travelled all alone
through the forest of wonderful,
and that my feet have surely known
the furious ways and the peaceful.

and because she is beautiful.

Man's Responsibility

Chance or Destiny: Turning Points in American History. By Oscar Handlin. Atlantic-Little, Brown. 220 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by Henry Bamford Parkes

Every imaginative historian must occasionally ask himself how far the destiny of nations has

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been determined by the intrusion of events which belong to some non-historical causal sequence and therefore appear in a historical frame of reference as accidental. Would the fortunes of mankind have been decisively altered if the weather on some critical occasion had behaved differently or if some individual in a key position had inherited different genes, survived a madman's bullet, or succumbed prematurely to an epidemic? But although such speculations may provide agreeable after-dinner conversation, they rarely lead to conclusions of much validity or significance. The kindest comment one can make about Professor Handlin's *Chance or Destiny* is that it will not add to his reputation. *The Uprooted,* which was a masterpiece of both literature and historiography, established him as one of the ablest of the younger American historians. His present opus is an unconvincing *jeu d'esprit,* written in a painfully oversimplified style and containing more than the scholar's legitimate quota of factual errors.

Mr. Handlin takes eight episodes, all of them connected directly or indirectly with American foreign policy, and suggests that each of them shows how chance "at some decisive turning point gave an unexpected twist to historical development." The episodes are the Battle of Yorktown, the purchase of Louisiana, the explosion on the *Princeton* which killed Secretary of State Upshur in 1844, the Battle of Gettysburg, the purchase of Alaska, the acquisition of the Philippines, the sinking of the *Lusitania,* and Pearl Harbor. At the end of the book he declares that "it may help men to remember now that if nothing is inevitable, and chance within the limits of the situation is everywhere a possibility, then there is always scope for the assertion of man's influence. He has not been absolutely governed by historical law, but at the numerous turning points of his past has been capable of acting freely, for good or ill, upon the opportunities the situation afforded."

Insofar as Mr. Handlin actually attempts to demonstrate the importance of chance, the examples which he chooses are not very persuasive. Washington's victory at Yorktown was partly due to the weather; but in spite of French suggestions of a compromise peace, it is likely that another American failure would merely have postponed the establishment of full independence. One can argue that Napoleon might have decided to keep Louisiana if a French expedition destined for the New World had not been held ice-bound in a Dutch port; but on the other hand Mr. Handlin offers no convincing reason for supposing that this was actually a decisive factor in his decision to sell it. The death of Upshur and the succession of Calhoun caused the negotiations for the annexation of Texas to become more deeply involved with the slavery controversy; but the controversy was already inescapable, and the assertion that "the shells that fell around Fort Sumter in 1861 had long before been touched off by the explosion of the 'Peacemaker' on the *Princeton*" must surely be one of the most startling nonsequiturs ever perpetrated by a responsible historian. As for the failure of the Russians to develop Alaska, it had more fundamental causes than the fact that in 1805 a Russian official fell in love with a Spanish girl; and even if Schweiger had missed the *Lusitania,* it is predictable that other events would have aroused American feeling against Germany. With regard to Gettysburg, the conquest of the Philippines, and Pearl Harbor, Mr. Handlin does not even try to show that chance was significantly involved.

Mr. Handlin's conclusion suggests, however, that what he is really interested in demonstrating is not that history is sometimes determined by chance—a thesis which can promote only an attitude of fatalistic acquiescence—but something fundamentally different: namely, that since the course of events is not governed by immutable laws of causation, it may be influenced by human intelligence or folly. In actuality, of course, all history is a product of human decisions, although most of them are made by large groups, so that extremes of wisdom and stupidity tend to cancel each other out, statistical laws come into play, and the power of any individual is relatively small. But there is always a wide margin of contingency, and at certain moments, even in a society governed not by a king but by the popular will, a few individuals may decisively change historic processes. Obviously Washington's capacity for leadership was more important in determining the outcome of the War of Independence than the state of the weather at Yorktown; neither Louisiana nor Alaska would have been purchased if men who believed in expansion had not been in control of American foreign policy; and Pearl Harbor might not have been a disaster if certain officials in high places, instead

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of being obsessed with the threat to Indonesia, had paid more attention to General Short's message indicating that he was taking precautions not against a surprise air attack but against sabotage. But the clearest example—for which, fortunately, American history offers few parallels—is the acquisition of the Philippines. This was brought about by a few determined men, especially by Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt, who were able to take advantage of the incredibly haphazard policies of the McKinley administration and the vague dreams of imperial glory that were beginning to infect the American people. If, instead of plunging into the Philippines as a result of the maneuvers of Theodore Roosevelt, American leaders had shown enough wisdom to resolve that Hawaii should be the western limit of our interests, would we ever have found it necessary to oppose Japanese expansion, or have fought a war in the Pacific, or have confronted a Communist China? It was neither chance nor destiny that caused the United States to become inextricably involved in the affairs of the Far East, but the actions of certain individuals in the year 1898. Human beings have always been afraid of recognizing the extent of their freedom, and have found it more comforting to attribute events not to their own decisions but to the gods or Fate or chance or immutable laws of biology or of economics. But at certain historic turning points man's responsibility for his own destiny becomes unmistakably clear.

Jewish Life in Prints

A JEWISH ICONOGRAPHY. By ALFRED RUBENS. The Jewish Museum (London). 160 pp. 75 illustrations. $14.80.

Reviewed by ALFRED WERNER

IT IS a great pity that we have so little pictorial documentation of Jewish life in the Middle Ages. The little that has survived consists largely of drawings and woodcuts showing expulsions and massacres of Jews, or, in a gentler vein, Jewish notables offering gifts to a prince, Jews taking the oath *more Judaico*, or trading with peasants. Individual Jews were caricatured as Sons of the Devil, excepting, perhaps, an occasional physician or a celebrated minnesinger like Süsskind von Trimberg. Jews portrayed in their usual surroundings and occupations appear only in a few illuminated Hebrew manuscripts adorned with drawings by *soferim* (Jewish scribes).

From the 16th century on, however, an ever increasing number of artists drew Jews as they actually appeared, to satisfy the curiosity of the Christian world rather than to incite it to pogroms. The invention of engraving in the 16th century, and of lithography in the 18th, made possible the reproduction of pictures in almost unlimited quantities, and a good number have survived in prints.

We would no doubt have more pictures of Jews but for the Jewish taboo itself against personal portraiture. Alfred Rubens, in his *Anglo-Jewish Portraits* (1935), to which this present volume is complementary, tells of an eminent London rabbi whose portrait was painted, without his knowledge, by an artist working in an adjoining room while he was being entertained by friends. There are, however, many 17th- and 18th-century portraits of professing Jews who sat for artists without considering themselves guilty of transgressing the Second Commandment. Often only the prints made of these drawings and oils have survived.

These historically as well as artistically invaluable prints might never been collected and catalogued but for Alfred Rubens. About thirty years ago he began to ferret them out of bookstores, printshops, and the dusty corners of Europe and the United States, his hobby then turning into a life-work. The two large volumes he compiled are painstakingly accurate *catalogues raisonnés* of his own collection, plus a number of items to be found in the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York and elsewhere. Quite a few prints of British origin are listed in the current volume, and several of them are reproduced, but on the whole the scope is larger than that of his *Anglo-Jewish Portraits*. *A Jewish Iconography* ranges over all of Europe from Amsterdam to Constantinople, and even includes material from Alexandria, Cairo, Damascus, and Jerusalem. And also the number of illustrations is much greater, offering a more valuable and imposing panorama.

CATALOGUES, of course, do not make the most exciting reading, and this one is no exception. But fortunately *A Jewish Iconography* is more than catalogue. In part, for one thing, its alphabetical listing of the portraits of Jewish personalities constitutes a kind of Jewish biographical dictionary. Most of the likenesses are of people

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from Continental Europe; these include Lassalle, the Mendelssohns, Jacob Meyerbeer, Joseph Suess Oppenheimer, the Rothschilds, Sabbatai Zevi, and Spinoza. Among the Americans we find Mordecai Manuel Noah.

Secondly, the book, which is handsomely bound in half vellum and blocked in gold, has an intrinsic artistic appeal thanks to its many woodcuts, engravings, etchings, and lithographs. Many of the artists represented in it are unimportant, but there are at least a few samples of work by such outstanding men as Chodowiecki (Germany); Dalle Piani (Italy); the Cruikshanks, Hogarth, and Rowlandson in England; Picart, Ruysdael, and the great Rembrandt in Holland. Of the Jewish artists, the most significant are Moritz Daniel Oppenheim, Edouard Moise, and Simeon Solomon. Quite a few of the tradecards, watch papers, and ornamental bill-heads are the work of generally anonymous Jewish engravers—engraving, like embroidering, being an art in which the pre-Emancipation Jews excelled and having an ultimately Oriental origin.

Thirdly, the volume is a form of *Kulturgeschichte* in its depiction, both in the reproductions and in the texts describing prints not reproduced, of bygone customs and costumes. Mr. Rubens devotes a good deal of space to artistically inferior but historically fascinating little prints, many of them caricatures, that enjoyed an enormous vogue, especially in the 18th century. The general populace did not then read newspapers, many people were barely literate, and it remained for cartoonists, political and otherwise, to give an account of the most sensational, most picturesque, though not necessarily most edifying characters and episodes of the day. Thus there are more pictures of mountebanks and scoundrels, adventurers and crackpots, than of saintly men and women. These cheap and generally crude prints, which were sold in the streets for a few pennies, offer an exciting social history covering the period, in England, from Henry VIII to Queen Victoria. There are, inevitably, many gaps in such a collection of prints, partly because the paper on which they were printed was too flimsy to survive, and partly because the victims of the unflattering ones, or their relatives, bought up and destroyed them. The family of Lord George Gordon, for example, an 18th-century convert to Judaism whose subsequent misfortunes held the attention of a half-amused, half-infuriated public, made strenuous efforts to destroy the sensational broadsheets in which he figured.

Mr. Rubens's social history embraces more than England. We are taken to Constantinople, where in 1528 a Jew, after being converted to Christianity, is martyred by the Turks; to North Africa, where Jews were forced to wear a distinctive dress long after their co-religionists shed it in other parts of the world; to the Crimea, with the distinctive synagogues and burial grounds of the Karaite sect; to Bordeaux, where Jews cried their wares through the streets, *"Vieux habits, vieux galons!"* or *"Quelque chose à vendre!"* In Frankfort-on-Main, the plundering of the ghetto follows the riots instigated by Fettmilch, the Haman of 1614; in Hamburg, the publication of Dr. Jenner's revolutionary work on vaccination prompts a hostile cartoonist to lampoon the English physician and his German translator as despicable Jews because Hamburg's Jewry welcomed vaccination.

Emancipation came to European Jewry by way of the French Revolution and the Bonapartes. There is a picture showing the Grand Sanhedrin assembled to receive the Emperor Napoleon's address, and one showing Jews on the balconies of Amsterdam synagogues cheering Louis Napoleon on his entry into the city.

In its emancipation of the Jews, England was a hundred years ahead of the Continent. But the mass of the people remained prejudiced, and a flood of venomous pamphlets and cartoons greeted the "Jew Bill" of 1753, which permitted the naturalization of foreign Jews. Sir Robert Peel, who at the beginning of the 19th century worked hard to repeal what anti-Jewish legislation remained, was frequently the butt of cartoonists.

Anti-Semitism seems not to have been as vicious and vituperative in England as in other countries. A cartoon in which a farmer voices this complaint to a Jewish peddler at a fair:

Sirrah! I tell you you're a knave
To cry up razors that can't shave

appeared in the same year as one depicting an old-clothesman in a kindly light:

A Jew may have a heart as pure
As any Christian I am sure.

Jews were frequently attacked by hoodlums in the 18th-century London streets; as they could not expect help either from the police

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or passers-by, they were quite defenseless. The Jewish street men replied to this by taking up boxing and routing the ruffians. A newspaper, quoted by Mr. Rubens, refers to a diminutive Jewish orange vender who was charged in court with having assaulted a porter twice his size. Several Jewish professional boxers were in high favor in England's pugilistic circles and one of them, Mendoza, became a national hero. Terms like "a Mendoza" and "Jew's blow" crept into the jargon of the sport.

But the general reader will pay most attention to the illustrations (which are reproduced in collotype), and rightly so. Most mirror the spirit of the Baroque Age, others reflect Rococo and Neo-Classical styles. In quality, they range from crude folk art to great graphic work, such as the engraving made after Guérin's charming portrait of Fanny von Arnstein, or the etching of an Algerian Jewess made by Guérin's most famous pupil, Eugène Delacroix. Nor are the quite unpretentious tradecards—one of a Jewish optician and mathematical instrument maker to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Gloucester, and to His Grace, the Duke of Wellington; another of a "slopman" (purveyor of cheap readymade clothing) to his Royal Highness, Prince William Henry—devoid of charm. And the story of Jewish emancipation cannot be expressed more dramatically than by the juxtaposition of the offensive wood engraving of "Jobst Mellern," a 16th-century dweller of the Prague ghetto, barefoot, in a cloak bearing the "Jew badge," and the delicate stipple engraving of that elegant 19th-century American gentleman, Major Mordecai Manuel Noah.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

DAVID BAUMGARDT, formerly consultant in philosophy to the Library of Congress, is the author of many philosophical works, and most recently *Bentham and the Ethics of Today.*

GEORGE J. LIEBER is managing editor of *News from Behind the Iron Curtain,* published by the Free Europe Committee.

ROBERT W. FLINT lives in Boston and has published essays in the literary quarterlies.

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES has written widely on American life and history.

ALFRED WERNER contributes frequently on modern art and Jewish matters.

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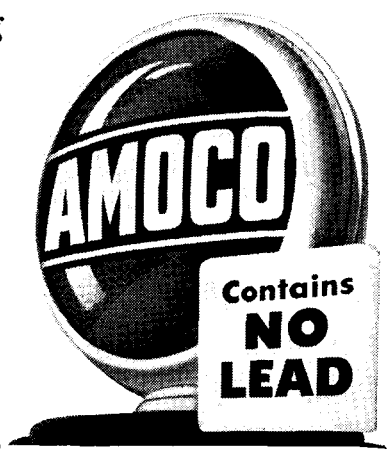

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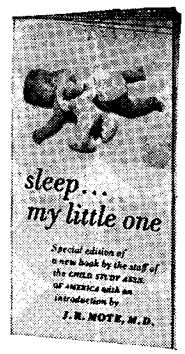

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